

# HISTORY OF MUSLIM EDUCATION

by  
**AHMAD SHALABY**

B. A. Hon. ( Cairo )  
Ph. D. ( Cambridge )

Lecturer in History of Islamic civilization  
University of Cairo

This work secured for the author the award of the Degree of  
Doctor of Philosophy in the University of Cambridge



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134726



بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

God will exalt those of you who believe and those  
who have knowledge, to high degrees.

Holy Qur'ân 58 : 11

Are those who know equal with those who know not?

Holy Qur'ân 39 : 9







from PROFESSOR A. J. ARBERRY, PEMBROKE COLLEGE, CAMBRIDGE

10 October 1952

I have much pleasure in warmly recommending the publication of Dr Ahmad Shalaby's thesis entitled "The History of Muslim Education with special reference to Egypt". This work, which secured for Dr Shalaby the award of the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy in this University, is a most valuable contribution to knowledge. Based very largely upon unpublished manuscripts, together with extremely wide reading of printed texts, it collects together a vast range of important information, which has been critically examined and competently arranged. The publication of this book will be a great service to scholarship.

h. j. arberry





كلية دارالعلوم

مطوب الزم : ٢٢

شأن موافقة الجامعة على طبع رسالة الدكتور احمد شلي  
للدكتوراه على تعقيبها .

الرجوع عند ذكر هذا الرقم ١٠٦٦

١٩٥٣/١/١٨

١٩٥٣/١/١٨

عدد الملاحظات

جامعة بوزار الأولى

المكتب العامة

٢١٧٩

١٩٥٣/١/١٨

١٩٥٣/١/١٨

حضرة الأستاذ الدكتور عميد كلية دارالعلوم  
أنشرف بأن أخبر حضراتكم أن حضرات أعضاء لجنة المكتبة والطبع والنشر قد  
وافقوا على أن تطبع على نفقة الجامعة رسالة حضرة الدكتور احمد شلي المدرس  
بالكلية التي حصل بها على الدكتوراه من جامعة كمبودج - فرجو التكرم بتكليف  
حضرتكم بتقديم أصول الرسالة الى مطبعة الجامعة في أقرب فرصة .  
وتفضلوا بقبول فائق الاحترام ،

المراقب العام

للمكتبات الجامعية

(توقيع)

حضرة الدكتور احمد جاب الله شلي

يسرني أن أبلغ حضراتكم سورة ماورد الى الكلية من الجامعة بشأن موافقة  
لجنة المكتبة والطبع والنشر على طبع رسالتكم للدكتوراه على نفقة الجامعة .  
مع قبول خالص الشكر والتحية ،

عبدالكليم

ابراهيم البلي



١٩٥٣/١/١٨



## The Opposite Page

The opposite page bears a zincographical copy of a letter to the author from the University of Cairo telling him of the decision taken by the University to print and publish this work at its expense.

The decision, however, was taken after an agreement had been reached between the author and Dar al-Kashaf for the publication of this book. The author expresses his deep thankfulness to the University scholars for the appreciation of this work, and hopes it will be as useful as they expected.



# FOREWORD

Islam has many claims upon the admiration and gratitude of mankind. Much has been written of the contribution made by the Muslim peoples to art, literature science, politics. None of these achievements would have been possible but for that devotion to learning and education which has characterised those peoples throughout their history; men and women who obeyed implicitly their Prophet's command, « Seek after Knowledge, even if it be in China. » To investigate and describe the educational systems established in Islam is therefore obviously a most important and interesting task.

In the present book, my friend and former pupil Dr. Ahmad Shalaby publishes the results of his investigation, which he undertook as candidate for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy in the University of Cambridge. Every reader will agree that his research has been both profound, and highly successful. Many printed works, and a large number of unpublished manuscripts, were consulted in the course of the study. In choosing and using these sources Dr Shalaby has displayed the qualities so necessary to the researcher; patience, thoroughness, enthusiasm, discrimination a capacity to recognise and go to the heart of a problem, a gift of clear and orderly exposition. The book is not only a substantial contribution to knowledge; it is also a pleasure to read, a volume to gratify the pride of every Muslim lover of Knowledge.

It gives me great pleasure to congratulate Dr Ahmad Shalaby on bringing his doctorate thesis to print, and to commend what he has written to the serious attention of his readers.

**A. J. ARBERRY**

Pembroke College,  
Cambridge.

Professor of Arabic in the  
University of Cambridge

## CORRECTION

### Page Line

Words in the line should run as follows :

17	25	rely in illustrating . . .
25	28	useful instruction for him
33	33-34	{ Ahmad b Abi Da'ad
129	22	
137	14	
34	1	The first line is to be drapped out
53	11	Abu 'Amr
77	19	rather than to have
89	30	way for possessing
102	19	renewal of this library
122	7	went on to say
122	9	have no character
143	24	the opposite plan
179	11	al Walwâjî
198	19	"Unaidah
207	10	is the movement
229	8	to Abi Ja'far
Passim		khuda Bakhsh



## TABLE OF TRANSLITERATION

The system adopted in this work is explained below :

### Consonants

ء (المهمزة)	'	ص	s (italics)
ا	a	ض	d «
ب	b	ط	t «
ت	t	ظ	z «
ث	th	ع	»
ج	j	غ	gh
ح	h (italics)	ف	f
خ	kh	ق	q
د	d	ك	k
ذ	dh	ل	l
ر	r	م	m
ز	z	ن	n
س	s	هـ	h
ش	sh	و	w
		ي	y

**Note:** The letters ح، ص، ض، ط and ظ are represented by italic letters as explained above, but they may appear in words printed wholly in italics. These letters, then, are represented by letters printed in the normal form.

### Vowels

َ (الفتحة) = a	َا (الفتحة الممدودة) = â
ِ (الكسرة) = i	ِا (الكسرة الممدودة) = î
ُ (الضمة) = u	ُا (الضمة الممدودة) = û

اَ = al

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# HISTORY OF MUSLIM EDUCATION

## SUMMARY

This study deals with the history of Muslim education from the beginning of Islam (early 7th century A.D.) till the fall of the Ayyûbid dynasty in Egypt ( 648 A. H. 1250 A. D. ) . The thesis is divided into five chapters and a supplement.

Chapter I is devoted to «Places for teaching purposes». It is here pointed out that the year 459 A. H. marks the beginning of an epoch in the history of Muslim education, as in this year the first school in Nizâm al-Mulk's system was opened in Baghdad. Before that development, education was conducted in places of various kinds, each of which has been described separately in the following sections:

- (1) *Kuttâb* for the teaching of reading and writing;
- (2) *Kuttâb* for teaching the *Qur'ân* and elementary subjects;
- (3) Elementary education in the palaces;
- (4) Bookshops;
- (5) Houses of learned men;
- (6) Literary salons;
- (7) The desert;
- (8) Mosques;

Education in schools is then surveyed and certain questions answered, viz:

- (1) Why did education move from mosques to schools?
- (2) What was the difference between mosques and schools?



(3) Why were schools mostly devoted to religious studies?

A list is next given of the schools established by Nizâm al-Mulk in Irâq and Khurâsân, those founded by Nûr al-Dîn in Syria, and the Ayyûbid schools in Egypt and Syria. As a type of school in medieval Islam, a detailed study is given of al-Nûriyyah al-Kubrâ in Damascus which I visited and studied on the spot.

Chapter II is concerned with libraries which were used as educational institutes. Their importance is such as to require a whole chapter in which, after illustrating the moral value of books and libraries in the Muslim world, I describe library buildings, the arrangements of books on shelves, the catalogues and the system of borrowing books. The library staff is described in an extensive section in this chapter, some details being given about librarians, translators, scribes, binders and attendants. Then follows a short account of the financial position of the library, after which the chapter ends with examples of some public, semi-public and private libraries.

Teachers form the subject of Chapter III which begins with an explanation of the prestige enjoyed by teachers in Muslim opinion. Other sections in the Chapter appear under these titles:-

- The relation between governments and teachers;
- Teachers' social status;
- Teachers' financial position;
- Repeaters (*Mu''ids*);
- Teachers' character and duties;
- Certificates;
- Punishment;
- Rewards and Prizes;
- Teachers' garments;
- Teachers' guild .

Students are considered in Chapter IV. The attitude of Islam towards education is here discussed, followed by al-Ghazâlî's views on the training of children. Subsequent sections are: -

Equalitarianism in education;  
Direction and guidance of students;  
Ages for study;  
Size of class-room;  
Body and mind;  
Students' character and duties;  
Relations among students;  
Students' efforts to acquire knowledge;  
Travel for study;  
The education of women.

Founders and endowments and organization are dealt within the concluding chapter (V), in which a short account is given of three notable founders (al-Ma'mûn -- Nûr al-Dîn -- Saladin). A concise biography of Nizâm al-Mulk precedes a historical survey of educational endowments.

The chapter ends with sections on: — The circle — Stages of education—Residential education.

Egypt is given preponderant emphasis whenever the period of its independence is being discussed. This emphasis is due to the fact that Egypt, under the Fâtimid and the Ayyûbid dynasties, was a very important — perhaps the most important — cultural centre in the Islamic world.

The supplement is devoted to the principal subject studied in Egypt under the Fâtimids, i.e. Ismâ'ilism. Relying upon the main Ismâ'ili published and unpublished works, I have attempted to elucidate Ismâ'ilî doctrines and the plan drawn up to propagate them: Teaching, poetry, observance of certain Holy Days etc. The supplement ends with an account of the cultural reaction caused by the rise of the Ayyûbid dynasty.

## ACKNOWLEDGMENT

I should like to express my profound thanks to Professor A. J. Arberry for proposing the subject and supervising my work. Indeed Professor Arberry's constructive criticism, helpful suggestions and inspiring guidance have been of the greatest help to me in the preparation of this thesis.

I am under a great obligation to Cairo University for nominating me for a scholarship and also to the Egyptian Government for granting it, thus enabling me to study in Great Britain for several years and to visit other countries for the purpose of research.

In the course of this research, and especially during my journey in the Middle East, I received considerable help both from scholars, who put their collections at my service, and from librarians who offered me generous facilities in using the libraries. To all these men:

Professor M. A. *Hassûnah* of Egypt.

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Ustadh "Abbâs al-"Azzawî of Baghdad;

Shaikh Aghâ Buzurj of al-Najaf;

Professor Ahmad Atish of Istanbul;

I express my deepest gratitude.

A. Shalaby.



## INTRODUCTION

At the beginning of his book, « *The Educational Renaissance of the Sixteenth Century* », Paul Monroe says: « It is with the greatest difficulty that one obtains concrete information concerning educational activities in the past; especially any connected and tolerably complete account of the details of school life ». This statement applies equally well to information about education in medieval Islam. Indeed much labour has gone to the completion of the present work. I often read some voluminous work on the assumption that I should find useful material in it, only to discover very little relevant to my purpose or nothing at all. Muslim historians concentrated upon political and military activities and paid little attention to social and educational reforms. The establishment of schools by Nizâm al-Mulk, for example, is recorded in a very few lines while his other exploits are described in full detail. More astonishing still, Saladin's educational enterprise is completely ignored in *al-Mahâsin al-Yûsufiyyah* of Ibn Shaddâd, Saladin's *Qâdî* and private secretary. The work contains a detailed account of Saladin's birth, life, character and campaigns but nothing on education. Even the few educational treatises, mostly very slender works, tend all to repeat the same material, which is principally concerned with the character and duties of teachers and students.

Another fact has to be stated here; namely, for each section of this work different sources were needed. In Chapter one, for instance, the sources for the *Kuttâb*, the houses of learned men, literary salons, mosques, schools and so on are obviously different in each case.

Thus, in the compilation of my work, I had to make use of a very great number of books and documents in order to gather the material bearing on my subject. This led me to visit Egypt, Syria, Lebanon, Palestine, Turkey, and Iraq in addition to some European Countries to study the literary and archaeological evidence relating to the history of education.

The subject, as far as I know, has never been treated in detail before. Apart from a few short articles, and allusions in works written with a different purpose, the field of the history of Muslim education was unexplored. Moreover these articles and works were not based on the authorities I used.

Sources upon which I relied can be divided into four sections :

1. Archaeological evidence;
2. Educational treatises;
3. Works on general learning;
4. Historical works.

1. *Archaeological evidence*: This evidence is invaluable, and I had the opportunity, particularly in Damascus, of seeing and studying a great deal of epigraphical material and the 6th century school building founded by Nûr al-Dîn. It was these inscriptions which furnished me with accurate information on the question of endowments for schools. The inscribed stone placed upon the main entrance of *al-Nûriyyah al-Kubrâ* enabled me to correct al-Nu'îmî (927 A.H.) who wrongly attributes the foundation of this school to Ismâ'il b. Nûr al-Dîn. (The work contains some photographs of this material.)

2. *Educational treatises*: The main educational treatises on which I drew are :

- Ibn Jumâ'ah : *Tadhkirat al-Sâmi' wa al-Mutakallim*  
Ibn Shaddâd : *al-A'lâq al-Khatîrah*, MS. Damascus  
al-Nu'îmî : *al-Dâris*  
Ibn 'Abdûn : *Risâlah* (*Journal Asiatique* 1934)  
al-Jâhiz : *Risâlat al-Mu'allimîn*, MS. Mawsil  
al-Qâbisi : *al-Fudlah*  
al-Qatmûnî : *Targhîb al-Nâs ilâ al-'ilm* MS. Istanbul

Ibn Sahnûn : *Adâb al-Mu'allimîn*  
 Anonymous : *Minhâj al-Muta'allim*, MS. in my private  
 collection  
 Abû Hanîfah : *Advice to one of his students* MS. Istanbul  
 al-Walid b. Bakr. : *al-Wijâzah* MS. Baghdad  
 al-Zarnûjî : *Ta'lim al-Muta'allim*  
 al-Shahîd : *al-Munyah* MS. in al-Najaf  
 Tâsh Kubrî zâdah : *Risâlah fî 'Ilm al-Adab* MS in  
 Baghdad  
 al-'Amilî : *Adab al-Mufid wa al-Mustafid*.

The information taken from these sources is very valuable. Ibn Jumâ'ah, for example, has furnished the answers to a number of important questions in this research, particularly in the description of the circle, the etiquette to be adopted by boarders in a residential school, ages of study and the borrowing of books. Most of these points are only dealt with by Ibn Jumâ'ah, *Minhâj al-Muta'allim*, which I had the luck to discover in Aleppo in a chest of MSS., is unique, as far as I know, in speaking about testing the intelligence of the students and classifying them according to their standard of intelligence. *al-Wijâzah*, which I saw in the private collection of 'Abbâs al-'Azzâwi, was a very important source for the certificates and permission for teaching. *Risâlat al-Mu'allimîn* of al-Jâhiz, which was believed to be lost, was very helpful particularly on the teachers' social status. *Adâb al-Mu'allimîn* of Ibn Sahnûn, which is wrongly attributed by Ibn Khaldûn to Muhammad b. Zaid, provided an important statement on the fact of girls being taught separately. Some writers, misunderstanding the sources, have fallen into error on this point. A great deal of information is quoted from al-Nu'imî. In fact all the educational treatises mentioned here contributed something of value.

3. *Works on General Learning*: Works on general learning are very numerous in Arabic literature. My study of these works proved very profitable as they cover a number of different subjects including education. These works can be classified thus:



A. Travellers' narratives, notably the following:

al-Ya`qûbî	: <i>Kitâb al-Bulldân</i>
Ibn al-Faqîh	: <i>al-Bulldân</i>
al-Maqdisî	: <i>Ahsan al-Taqâsîm</i>
Ibn Hawqal	: <i>al-Masâlik wa al-Mamâlik</i>
Ibn Jubair	: <i>al-Rihlah</i>
Yâqût	: <i>Mu`jam al-Bulldân</i>
Ibn Battûtah	: <i>Tuhfat al-Nuzzâr</i>

These travellers made their long journeys through the Islamic world and recorded on the spot what they saw and heard. The description of the mosque of Damascus and the cost of building it is quoted from Ibn al-Faqîh. Useful material on teachers' garments is taken from al-Maqdisî and in general these works and Ibn Jubair in particular are my authorities for a great number of schools and endowments, several libraries and the description of some circles.

B. Biographical works: Arabic literature has a large and a well organised collection of this sort both published and unpublished. From these sources I drew a great deal of my material and consequently the reader, in most of the sections, will find references to :—

al-Isfahânî	: <i>al-Aghânî</i>
Ibn al-Nadîm	: <i>al-Fihrist</i>
al-Anbârî	: <i>Tabaqât al-Udabâ'</i>
al-Kharîb al-Baghdâdî	: <i>Tarîkh Baghdâd</i>
Yâqût	: <i>Mu`jam al-Udabâ'</i>
Ibn Khallikân	: <i>Wafayât al-A`yân</i>
al-Kutbî	: <i>Fawât al-Wafayât</i>
al-Safadî	: <i>al-Wâfi</i> MS.
al-Qiftî	: <i>Akhhâr al-Hukamâ'</i>
Ibn Abî Usaibi`ah	: <i>"Uyûn al Anbâ'</i>
al-Subkî	: <i>Tabaqât al-Shâfi`iyyah</i>
al-Maqqarî	: <i>Nafh al-Tîb</i>
Ibn Qâdî Shuhbah	: <i>Manâqib al-Shâfi`î wa Ashâbihi</i> MS. Damascus



the work of Abû Hayyân I relied, to a great extent, for examples of study in the houses of learned men; and the opinion of al-Ghazâlî concerning the training of children is quoted from *al-Ihyâ'*. The encyclopaedic works of al-Jâhiz provide accounts of the curriculum for princes, the social status of teachers, the value of books and etiquette adopted by the people attending the literary salons. Kushâjim in *Adab al-Nadîm* and al-Sâbi in *Rusûm Dâr al-Khilâfah* are especially illuminating on this last point.

From Ibn Duqmâq, *al-Khitat and Husn al-Muhâdarah* I obtained a great deal of information connected with Egypt.

4. *Historical Works* : In my historical review I made use of historical works, both the general history of the Muslim world such as: al-Tabarî, Ibn al-Athîr and *al-'Ibar* of Ibn Khaldûn, and the local ones such as: *Târikh Al Saljûq*, *Târikh al-Umam al-Munqati'ah* (MS) *al-Rawdatain*, *Muṣarrij al-Karûb* (MS) *Iti'az al-Hunafâ* and many others. Of all these works, *al-Rawdatain* of Abû Shâmah was outstandingly helpful in that it explains the educational aspects of the short-lived kingdom of Nûr al-Dîn.

Modern works have been of great assistance to me. Lam-mens in his work «*Etudes sur le règne du Calife Omayyade Mo'awia, Ier*» was a good guide in the section on «Elementary Education in Palaces». Adam Mez devotes four chapters to studies on theologians, religious subjects, juridical sects and judges respectively, and from these sections I obtained much useful information especially on libraries, teachers' garments and on the elementary education in the palaces. The works of Stanly Lane Poole: *Cairo, Saladin* and *Egypt in the Middle Ages*, were extremely helpful, especially in describing the free and residential education in Egypt. Professor Gibb's *Arabic Literature* and *Muhammadianism* were indispensable for a number of points, particularly on the literary salons. Other books such as :—

Richard Coke . *Baghdâd : The City of Peace*

Palmer	: <i>Hârûn al-Rashid</i>
Nicholson	: <i>Literary History of the Arabs</i>
Browne	: <i>Literary History of Persia</i>
Khuda Bukhsh	: <i>Islamic Civilization</i>
Barthold	: <i>Muslim Culture</i>
Amir 'Ali	: <i>A short History of the Saracens</i>
Stern	: <i>Marriage in Early Islam</i>
Hitti	: <i>The History of the Arabs</i>
'Awwâd	: <i>Khazâ'in al-Kutub fî al-'Irâq</i>
Ahmad Amin	: <i>Fajr al-Islâm .. Duhâ al-Islâm .. Zuhr al-Islâm</i>

and articles in various periodicals especially the *Nineteenth Century*, *Islamic Culture* and the *Journal of Education*, were of great value and occasional reference is made to them throughout the work.

*A. Shalaby.*





CHAPTER I  
PLACES FOR TEACHING PURPOSES



The year 459 A. H. ( 1066 — 1067 A.D.) should be remembered as marking an epoch in the history of Muslim education. It is the year in which schools began to flourish in the Islamic world. The deeper significance of this epoch will be considered in a later part of this work; but its importance here lies in its relation to the places in which Muslim education was conducted. Thus the period before and the period after the year 459 A.H. correspond generally to the different kinds of places associated with teaching, which may be classified as follows: —

- 1) Places for education before the establishment of schools;
- 2) Schools.

Each of these will be discussed in its turn, but, as will appear later, in the first period education and instruction were not confined to one kind of place but flourished in a great number of diverse places ranging from bookshops and palaces to the very desert itself. The establishment of schools absorbed most of the educational activities and attracted the overwhelming majority of the instructors as well as the seekers of knowledge. Thus the number of the former places was extremely reduced though most of the types were preserved.



## 1. PLACES FOR EDUCATION BEFORE THE ESTABLISHMENT OF SCHOOLS

### A. *Kuttâb* for the Teaching of Reading and Writing

This sort of *Kuttâb* preceded the rise of Islam, but it was on a limited scale. It is recorded that Sufyân b. Umayyah and Abû Qais b. 'Abd Manâf were the first Meccan natives to learn the art of reading and writing. <sup>1</sup> Their teacher was the Christian Bishr ibn 'Abd al-Malik who had learnt this art in *Hîra*. And, the first man in Arabia to assume the teaching of reading and writing as a profession was a native of Wâdî al-Qurâ who lived there and began to teach some of his fellow-citizens to read and write. <sup>2</sup> Thus the number of people who learnt this art increased, but slowly, and, when Islam came, there were only 17 persons from Quraish who were able to read and write. <sup>3</sup> Owing to the needs of the new religious and political system, reading and writing were keenly encouraged, <sup>4</sup> and in the course of time the significance of this art was deeply realised and beautifully expressed. <sup>5</sup> Early Muslims, however, who could read and write were mostly working as amanuenses to the Prophet and thus non-Muslims took over the task of teaching reading and

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(1) Al-Balâdhurî : *Futûh al-Buldân*, p. 457.

(2) Al-Balâdhurî, p. 457. (3) *Ibid*.

(4) Reading and writing were very important especially for ambitious people who wished to occupy high positions in the new system. Many administrative posts sprang up with the foundation of new departments, but a knowledge of reading and writing was demanded of applicants. When the financial work in the *Diwân al-Kharâj* was translated into Arabic at the time of 'Abd al-Malik and his son al-Walid, more posts for those who could read and write appeared. Furthermore, this art was so significant that blind *Muhaddithûn* were not considered reliable because of their inability to read and write. ( Al-Nawâwî : *Tahdhîb al-Asmâ* p. 73. )

(5) Al-Jâhiz says : It is the pen which gives us knowledge of past generations and records the present for those to come. The pen is also essential in the *Diwâns*, and it is of vital necessity to the king, for it is with the help of the pen that the king, in his capital, receives tidings from different provinces and issues orders to them. ( *Risâlat al-Mu'allimîn* MS 8 B ).

writing which seems to have been left to them for a long time.<sup>1</sup> After the battle of Badr several captives were set free on condition that they taught a certain number of the Muslims to read and write, and this service was counted as their ransom.<sup>2</sup>

The *Kuttâb* for reading and writing, situated mostly in the teachers' houses, preserved its independence, specially in the East, from the other sort of *Kuttâb*, about which we will speak later, and in which *Qur'ân* and elementary religious knowledge were taught. Many famous authorities, if not all, fail to distinguish between the two kinds of *Kuttâb*. Of these we refer to Professor Ph. Hitti who says: « The curriculum of the elementary school *Kuttâb*, centered upon the *Qur'ân* as a reading text book. With reading went writing. Together with reading and penmanship the students were taught Arabic grammar, stories of the Prophets, particularly *Hadîths* relating to Muhammad ». <sup>3</sup> The same conclusion was drawn by Dr. Ahmad Amin who says: « Some of the *Kuttâbs* were for teaching reading, writing and *Qur'ân*, and in some others the language and so on were taught as well ». <sup>4</sup>

References have been made which show that *Dhimmîs* and captives of Badr were the teachers in these *Kuttâbs* in the early times of Islam, and of course such teachers had nothing to do with the *Qur'ân* and religious knowledge. About later times we have three notable authorities who flourished at various periods and upon whom we can confidently rely illustrating this point:—

- 1 — Ibn Jubair (614 A. H.) says: « In most places the teacher of the *Qur'ân* is other than the teacher of reading and writing. The pupil goes apart from learning the recitation of the *Qur'ân* to study writing, and so he can have a good handwriting because the teacher of penmanship

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(1) See al-Balâdhurî : *Futuh al-Buldân*, p. 147 and 459. See also Lammens, p. 361.

(2) Al-Mubarrad : *al-Kâmil* ed. Wright I : 171.

(3) *The History of the Arabs*, p. 408.

(4) *Duha al-Islam*, vol. II, p. 50.

does not teach anything else». <sup>1</sup>

2 — Ibn Barrûta ( 779 A. H. ) records the same facts in similar words. He says: « The teacher of penmanship is different from the teacher of the *Qur'ân*. The former teaches the pupils using poetry and other things, but not the *Qur'ân* out of reverence for it. The boy goes from learning the *Qur'ân* to writing because the teacher of penmanship does not teach anything else». <sup>2</sup>

3 — Ibn Khaldûn ( 808 A. H. ) says: « Penmanship is not to be taught with the *Qur'ân* and religion: There is a certain canon and there are special teachers for teaching reading and writing as all crafts are taught. Reading and writing are not dealt with in the pupils' elementary schools (*Kuttâb al-Sibyân*) and any one who wants to learn them must seek<sup>3</sup> them from the professional teachers». <sup>3</sup>

Thus this was the first institution established in Arabia, and I believe that, from its function «*Taktîb*», the word «*Kuttâb*» or «*Maktab*» was derived. The origin of the word was later forgotten and al Mubarrad, when describing «*al Maktab*», as «an educational institution» does not notice the limited meaning of its root. It was applied also to the other institution which specialized in the *Qur'ân* and elementary religious knowledge. The children who formed the body taught in both institutions unintentionally applied the name of the first institution to the second, to which the next section will be devoted.

#### **B *Kuttâb* for the teaching of the *Qur'ân* and Elementary Subjects**

In his article about Muslim education, Goldziher attempts to trace this sort of *Kuttâb* back to the early time of Islam. To prove this point, he gives the following examples :

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(1) *Rihla* 272.

(2) *Tuhfat al Nazzar*, vol. I, p. 213.

(3) Ibn Khaldûn : *al-Muqaddimah*, p. 398

1. Umm Salama, a wife of the Prophet, asked a *Mu'allim Kuttâb* to send her some schoolboys to assist her in wool-carding.
2. 'Amr ibn Maimûn (74-77 A.H.) gives the text of an apotropaic formula which the companion Sa'd b. Abî Waqqâs taught his children as the teacher instructs his scholars in writing.
3. Ibn 'Umar and Abû Usaid on one occasion passed by a *Kuttâb* and attracted the attention of the boys.
4. The *Lawh* (tablet for practice in reading and writing) was in use at a very early period; the female companion Umm al Dardâ' writes on such a tablet some wise sentences as reading lessons for a boy.<sup>1</sup>

Goldziher did not distinguish between the two varieties of *Kuttâb*, and thus he took every mention of a *Kuttâb* as a proof that the *Kuttâb* for the teaching of the *Qur'ân* and elementary religious doctrine did exist very early. There is no single example out of the four mentioned by Goldziher to indicate the institution about which we are now speaking. On the contrary, there are more than one which indicate clearly that the *Kuttâb* referred to was that for teaching reading and writing.

As the curriculum of the *Kuttâb*, with which this article deals, was mainly based upon the *Qur'ân*, its existence naturally depended upon the existence of teachers who had learnt the *Qur'ân*. This leads us to emphasize the fact that the learning of the whole *Qur'ân* by one person was very rare in the early period of Islam.<sup>2</sup> As a response to the verse: «This is a blessed Scripture We have sent down to thee in order to be meditated upon»,<sup>3</sup> the companions devoted much care to understanding the *Qur'ân*. Each of them, it is related, did not

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(1) *Encyclopaedia of Religions and Ethics*, Vol. V, p. 199.

(2) See Ibn al-'Arabî : *Ahkâm al-Qur'ân* : II p. 291.

(3) *Sûra* 38, Verse 28.



proceed, after learning ten verses, until he knew their meaning and practised what had been demanded by them.<sup>1</sup> Thus Ibn 'Umar spent eight years learning *al-Baqarah*, and the companion Anas is stated to have said: «The man who was able to read *al-Baqarah* and *Al 'Imrân* seemed a great man among us».<sup>2</sup>

Furthermore, the collection of the *Qur'ân* was not available in various places prior to the time of 'Uthman.<sup>3</sup>

Even when the *Qur'ân* was learnt by a number of the companions, they were busied with greater tasks than teaching children. «Of the companions», says ibn Khaldûn, «those who had learnt the *Qur'ân* and its wisdom were the only group by whom legal responses could be issued and from whom the religious doctrines were to be received. They were called *al-Qurrâ'*, and later, when more people learnt the *Qur'ân*, and as a result of the codification of jurisprudence, they were distinguished by the title of jurist or theologian».<sup>4</sup> Now we come to the conclusion that this sort of *Kuttâb* did not appear during the early Muslim time.<sup>5</sup> Meanwhile children were taught rarely by

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(1) Al Suyûtî, *al-Itqân fi 'Ulûm al-Qur'ân* II : 208.

(2) Ahmad ibn Hanbal, *al-Musnad* : III : 120,

(3) See Sir William Muir, *The life of Muhammad* : 557.

(4) Ibn Khaldûn : *al-Muqaddimah*, p. 313.

(5) In my attempt to fix an approximate date for the start of this kind of *Kuttâb*, I formed the opinion that this *Kuttâb* as a public institution was a development of the elementary education in the palaces and al-Hajjâj's work marks the turning point in this development. The name of al-Hajjâj as a teacher is never accompanied, as far as I know, by the word *Kuttâb*, a fact which led me to believe that this sort of *Kuttâb* was not in existence at that time. He is always called *Mu'allim Sibiân* which is most likely to be a wider application of the idea of tutor. al-Qazwîni in *Athar al-Bilad* p.65, casts some light on this question when he says : al-Hajjâj began his career as a teacher to the *Wishaqiyyat* of Sulaimân b. Na'im, the minister of 'Abd al-Malik b. Marwan. The minister gave al-Hajjaj a certain post in the court and that was the first step towards al-

joining the *Halqahs*, as did "Alî b. Abi Tâlib and "Abd Allâh b. "Abbâs, and more often by private teachers or by their parents. So it is noteworthy that the early advice, regarding the teaching of children, was directed, not to the teachers of elementary schools, as was the case in later times, but mostly to the parents and sometimes to private tutors. Some of this advice will be referred to below.

About the place where this type of *Kuttâb* was held, it was recommended that children should not be educated in mosques as they are not careful about keeping the mosque quiet and clean;<sup>1</sup> but in practice this instruction was frequently neglected. Evidence shows that elementary schools existed in or adjoining the mosque as well as in private premises. Besides the numerous *Kuttâbs* existing in mosques,<sup>2</sup> we read about independent *Kuttâbs* here and there. Al Shâfi'i says: «My mother sent me to the *Kuttâb* ... and when I finished learning the *Qur'ân* I entered the mosque».<sup>3</sup> One of the most remarkable independent *Kuttâbs* — already referred to in a footnote — was that founded in Kûfa by Abû al-Qâsim al-Balkhî (d. 105 A.H.) in which there were 3000 pupils, and, in order to supervise them, he used to go up and down among them riding an ass.<sup>4</sup> Another al-Balkhî whose name is Ahmad ibn Sahl (d. 322 A.H.) was a teacher of children too and, because of his know-

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*Hajjaj's* fame. (The Persian word « *Wishaqiyyat* » means sons and attendants). Moreover the astonishing number of 3000 pupils who joined the *Kuttâb* of Abu al-Qâsim al-Balkhî (d. 105 A. H.) gives the impression that this sort of *Kuttâb* had but recently arisen, and so owing to the scarcity of such places of education that pupils crowded to al-Balkhî's *Kuttâb*.

- (1) Ibn "Abdûn, Muhammad al Tujibî *Journal Asiatique*, CCXXIV (1934), p. 214. See also al-Shaizari *Nihayat al-Rutbah fi Talab al-Hisbah*, p. 103 and al-Qurashi *Ma'âlim al-Qurbah*, p. 170.
- (2) See Ibn Battûta and Ibn Jubair, *passim* and Ibn Hawqal, p. 121, 127.
- (3) Ibn "Abd al-Barr, *Jâmi' Bayân al-'Ilm*, vol. I, p. 98.
- (4) Yâqût : *Mu'jam al-Udabâ*, vol. IV, p. 272.

ledge and prudence, he was raised to a high position.<sup>1</sup> The number of *Kuttâbs* and *Mu'allims* in the Muslim world increased rapidly and on a large scale until almost every village had its own *Kuttâb* if not more than one. In Palermo, for example, Ibn Hawqal on his visit to Sicily, claimed to have counted about 300 elementary teachers.<sup>2</sup>

The curriculum drawn up by 'Umar ibn al Khattâb and issued to the people in various Muslim countries was: «Teach your children swimming, horsemanship, famous proverbs and good poetry». <sup>3</sup> Another public curriculum is also ascribed to ibn al-Taw'am who is recorded to have said: «To do their duty towards their sons, fathers must educate them with writing, arithmetic and swimming». <sup>4</sup> When those who had learnt the *Qur'ân* took up the task of educating children, the *Qur'ân* became the centre of this elementary course. Learning the *Qur'ân* then preceded everything, and next came religious instruction <sup>5</sup> which had been left to the parents. With some poetry — other than erotic verse —, <sup>6</sup> elementary grammar and arithmetic the primary course was closed. It is not possible to accept what is stated in the *Encyclopaedia of Islam* that: «The main subject taught in children's schools was *Adab* so that the schools of children were called *Majâlis al-Adab*». <sup>7</sup> The refe-

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(1) *Ibid*, I : 141—152.

(2) *Kitab Surat al-Ard* of ibn Hawqal, Vol. I, p. 126. These 300 teachers were occupied in less than 300 *Kuttâbs*. Ibn Hawqal mentions (*Ibid* 129) that he had seen five teachers in one *Kuttâb*, which is likely to have been the case in other institutions too. So what is quoted by Ernst Diez, in his article in the *Encyclopaedia of Islam* under *Masjid* that Ibn Hawqal counted in Palermo 300 *Kuttâbs* should be corrected.

(3) Al-Jâhiz : *al-Bayân*, vol. II, p. 92.

(4) *Ibid*.

(5) Al-Ghazâlî : *al-Ihyd'* III : 57.

(6) See Ibn Miskawaih : *Tahdhib al-Akhlaq*, p. 20.

(7) *Encyclopaedia of Islam*, vol. III, p. 360.

rence given for this statement<sup>1</sup> does not mean that at all, so I think it is a misunderstanding of the source.

This was the general character of the curriculum, but nevertheless it varied from place to place. This is illustrated by ibn Khaldûn in his chapter on «The Different Ways of Teaching Children», which can be summed up as follows: It was a religious symbol to start with the *Qur'ân* in teaching children, and that was agreed to by all Muslim countries. But in al-Maghrib, the *Qur'ân* alone is the subject for pupils' study until they learn it perfectly. In Andalusia, as well as in the East, poetry, grammar and penmanship are to be studied also at that age, but, in Andalusia, penmanship is looked on as the most important subject. In Africa, the same subjects are taught, with considerable attention to the *Qur'ân*.<sup>2</sup>

*Sûrat al-Nûr*, in particular, was recommended for female students.<sup>3</sup>

We close this section by mentioning the names of brilliant persons who had in early times occupied the position of *Mu'allim Kuttâb* before reaching fame :

Al-Hajjâj ibn Yûsuf al-Thaqafî	d. 95 A.H.
Al-Dahhâk ibn Muzâhim	d. 105 A.H.
Al-Kumait ibn Zaid	d. 126 A.H.

### C. Elementary Education in the Palaces<sup>4</sup>

It was fully realized in the Islamic world that the course of study should vary according to the future career of the student.<sup>5</sup> Therefore a kind of elementary education was con-

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- (1) *Al-Aghânî*, vol. XVIII, p. 101 .
  - (2) Ibn Khaldûn : *al-Muqaddimah* 397-399 .
  - (3) Al-Jâhiz : *al-Bayân*, vol. II, p. 92 .
  - (4) In the Palaces there were two kinds of education; this is one of them, and the other will be described later on under the title « Literary Salons » .
  - (5) Ibn 'Abd Rabbih : *al-'Iqd al-Farîd*, vol. I, p. 263, al-Isfahânî : *Muhâdarât al-Udabâ'*, vol. I, p. 21 .



ducted in the Royal Palaces as well as the palaces of the leading figures in Muslim society. So this section is closely connected with the last section as both deal with the question of teaching children. The difference was in the curriculum, which, in the case of palace education, was usually drawn up by the father to suit his child, and furthermore students of this class continued to receive their higher education in the Palaces after the elementary school age. The teacher here was called «*Mu'addib*» (tutor or preceptor). The word «*Mu'addib*» is derived from the root «*Adab*» which includes both moral and intellectual qualities, and therefore it was applied in this sense as the tutor was to promote both qualities.<sup>1</sup>

This type of education was, as has been mentioned, carried on in the palaces, and in some cases the tutor would live in a wing of the palace with his pupil so that he might give him full attention. When Ahmad ibn Yahyâ Tha'lab was chosen tutor for Tâhir, the son of Muhammad ibn 'Abd Allâh ibn Tahir, the latter arranged a home in his palace in which the tutor resided and had his meals together with his pupil.<sup>2</sup> In other cases the home prepared for the tutor was outside the Palace. The Caliphs' habit, in the latter circumstances, was to present the preceptor with all the furniture placed in the apartments where he taught his pupil just at the close of the first day.<sup>3</sup> When an order was given for the transfer of all the furniture to his house, al-Ahmar, the tutor of al-Amin said that he had no suitable accommodation for this furniture. So al-Rashîd had a house bought and furnished for him.<sup>4</sup>

Although the main subjects were almost the same, some were added or omitted in accordance with the instructions of

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(1) al-Jâhiz : *Risâlat al-Mu'allimin*, MS. 11, B.

(2) Yâqût : *Mu'jam al-Udabâ'* ed. Farîd Rifâ'i : V : 125 - 126, Margolionth's edition here II : 144 is not correct. See also Adam Mez : *Die Renaissance des Islams*, Arabic translation by Abû Rîdah I : 308.

(3) *Ibid.* ed. Margolionth V : 110.

(4) *Ibid.*

the father. The following examples will show this difference as well as the end to which these students were prepared.

1. The instructions given by "Amr ibn "Utbah to the tutor of his sons read: «The first thing to start with in educating my sons is to improve your own manners. My sons will be deeply influenced by you and will favour what you do and abhor what you avoid. Teach them the *Qur'ân* but without wearying them of it, recite to them what is good in Traditions and chaste in poetry, do not substitute one subject for another, unless they perfectly know the former, teach them the virtues of wise men and keep them away from women's conversation.»<sup>1</sup>
2. Hishâm b. "Abd al-Malik is related to have said to the tutor of his son: «Give him instruction first in the Holy Book, then in poetry and great orations, the knowledge of good and evil, accounts of famous wars and lastly the art of conversation.»<sup>2</sup>
3. The most impressive guidance is given by al-Rashîd to al-Ahmar, the tutor of al-Amin, in which he said: «O, Ahmar, I have given you the child of my blood, the fruit of my loins and given you power over him and made him obedient to you, therefore prove worthy of this position. Teach him the *Qur'ân*, history, poetry, Traditions, appreciation of eloquence. Prevent him from laughing except on proper occasions. Accustom him to respect the Shaikhs of the Hâshim family, and to offer a proper place to the military commanders if they attend his Council. Do not allow any time to pass without having some useful instruction him for but do not make him sad. Do not be too kind to him or he will take to idleness. Improve him kindly, but if that will not suffice you can treat him harshly.»<sup>3</sup>

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(1) Ibn "Abd Rabbih, *al-'Iqd al-Farîd* : I : 363.

(2) Al-Isfahânî, *Muhâdarât al-'Udabâ'* I : 29.

(3) Ibn khaldûn, *al-Muqaddimah* 399, and al-Baihaqî : *al-Mahâsin wa al-Masâwî'* p. 617.

The Fatimids went further in the matter of having a special elementary curriculum in the Palace. Under them, the Palace had a boys' school where the youth of the upper class were taught and prepared for the caliphs' service.<sup>1</sup>

The post of preceptor was most attractive and conferred great prestige. But nevertheless ascetic people never coveted it. When Sulaimân b. 'Ali sent to al-Khalil b. Ahmad inviting him to supervise his sons, al-Khalil, after meeting the messenger, entered his own house and soon returned with some stale bread. Al-Khalil asked the messenger to have a piece of that bread saying: «I have nothing to offer you except such bread as this, and so long as I have it I do not need a post.»<sup>2</sup> Moreover, we read about learned men who not only declined posts of this kind but also refused to receive princes for private lessons. 'Abd Allâ b. Idris was one of these. When he was requested by al-Rashîd to receive al-Ma'mûn and give him a lesson on Traditions, he replied: «If al-Ma'mûn joins the audience, he will listen to the lecture».<sup>3</sup>

I am convinced that it was a desire unremittingly to serve the cause of learning and to teach the mass of students which prevented these men from devoting all their energy to one pupil.

#### D. Bookshops

Bookshops seem to have been the only successors to the old Arabian fairs of 'Ukaz, Mijannah and Dhi al-Majâz. In these fairs the pre-Islamic Arabs used to gather mainly for commercial purposes and then to take advantage of the gathering for literary speeches, discussion and debate.<sup>4</sup>

In addition to some slight dissimilarities between the two institutions, the daily meetings in the bookshops replaced the annual assembly of the old fairs.

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(1) Al-Maqrîzî *al-khitat* I : 443 - 444 .

(2) Ibn al-Anbârî, *Tabaqât al-Udabâ'* p. 57 .

(3) Ibn Jumâ'ah, *Tadhkirat al-Sâmi' wa al-Mutakallim*, p. 211 at foot.

(4) See Abu al-Fida II : 230 .

The bookshop appeared early under the Abbasids,<sup>1</sup> and soon afterwards a great number existed everywhere in the Islamic world. When speaking about Baghdâd, al Ya"qûbî mentioned more than a hundred bookshops counted in Waddâhs' quarter only.<sup>2</sup> In Egypt we read in Ibn Zûlâq's work that at the time of the Tûlûnîds and the Ikhshîds, there was a bazâr for *al-Warrâqîn* in which books were offered for sale and in its shops debates often took place.<sup>3</sup> Al-Maqrîzî, too, speaks about these bazârs many times in *al-Khitat*.<sup>4</sup>

The book-sellers were not only traders but usually men of letters. Of the large number, we mention Ibn al-Nadîm (d. 385) the author of the remarkable work *al-Fihrist*,<sup>5</sup> Yâqût (d. 626) the writer of *Mu"jam al-Udabâ'*, and *Mu"jam al-Buldân*<sup>6</sup> works in which a great deal of Arabic literature is preserved and 'Alî b. 'Isâ, called Ibn Kawjak, who died at the time of al-Hâkim, and who was a great scholar and author of many books.<sup>7</sup>

The function of the booksellers at that time extended to an important intellectual service. It was they who copied the best books and placed them in the hands of the public at the average price of one dinâr.<sup>8</sup> It was in their shops that a man

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(1) Hitti : *The History of the Arabs*, p. 414.

(2) Al Ya"qûbî, *al-Buldân*, p. 17.

(3) Ibn Zûlâq, *Akhbâr Sibawaih al-Misri*, pp. 33, 44 MS 1461; *Tarikh Taimur, Egypt*.

(4) See Vol. I, p. 361, vol. II, p. 96, p. 102.

(5) Yâqût vol. VI, p. 408

(6) Ibn Khillikân : *Wafayat al-A'yân* Vol. II, pp. 311, 312.

(7) Yâqût : *Mu"jam al-Udabâ'*, Vol. V, p. 179. Even at the present time we find many similar booksellers in Cairo. Hasan al-Sandûbî speaks about a bookseller called Shaikh 'Abd al-Ghanî who, al-Sandûbî says, being a man of wide knowledge, used to discuss many scientific and literary points with me, and supplied me with useful books instructing me, in studying them, to observe a certain method which helped me to a great extent. (*Introduction to al-Mûqabasât of Abû Hayyân* p. 3.)

(8) Saiyid Amir" Ali : *A short history of the Saracens*, p. 460.



such as al-Jâhiz would pay for the privilege of being locked in all night in order to read and copy what he wanted.<sup>1</sup> And finally what interests us most is to explain in some detail that bookshops were the resort of students and the learned class in general. References have been made to indicate this fact and we have many more of which we give a few examples:

1. Yâqût, after reading much about the Kharijites, adopted their view and used to sit in *Sûq al-Warrâqîn* in Damascus and debate with the Shî'ah adherents on their divergent opinions.<sup>2</sup>
2. It was stated that Abû al-Faraj al-Isfahânî, while sitting in a bookshop, heard Abû al-Fath al-Jazzâr reciting a poem of al-Sûlî. When Abû al-Fath reached a certain line of the poem he interrupted his recitation to repeat that line many times with admiration. Then Abû al-Faraj, who wanted to test al-Jazzâr's taste, sent somebody to ask him to point out the chief beauty in the line, and the reply was not acceptable to al-Isfahânî who gave his view of the matter and this disagreement led to a discussion.<sup>3</sup>
3. Ibn al Jawzî, speaking about *Sûq al-Warrâqîn* in Baghdâd, says it is a large market and it is the meeting-place of poets and learned people.<sup>4</sup>
4. Al-Maqrîzî says that *Sûq al-Warrâqîn* in Cairo was the favourite place of the seekers of knowledge which students as well as learned men frequented.<sup>5</sup>

Bookshops had an intellectual effect not only upon the booksellers but frequently upon their families as well. We read about Zainab and Hamda, the daughters of Zaid, the bookseller who lived at Wâdî al-Hima in the neighbourhood of Granada. They were both excellent poetesses, thoroughly versed

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(1) Yâqût : *Mu'jam al-Udabâ'* Vol. VI, p. 56 *al-Fihrist*, 169.

(2) Ibn Khallikan : *Wafayât al-A'yân*, Vol. II, p. 311,312.

(3) Yâqût : *Mu'jam al-Udabâ'* Vol. V, pp. 157-158

(4) Ibn al Jawzî : *Manaqib Baghdâd*, p. 26

(5) Al Maqrîzî : *al Khitât*, Vol. II, p. 102

in all branches of learning and science.<sup>1</sup>

In shops other than those for books, literary studies were also pursued. In his modest pottery shop, Abu al-"Atâhiyah used to be visited by a gathering of youth who loved literature, and to whom he would recite his poetry.<sup>2</sup> The dye-house of the theologian Abû Bakr al-Sabghî was a haunt of learned men and the *Muhaddithîn*, and, in the area in front of its door, Abû "Abd Allâh b. Ya"qûb used to sit and lecture to a numerous audience. We also read of a certain student who travelled to Baghdad to study, and after reaching a satisfactory standard, he hired a beast to carry him home. The groom entered a shop to buy things necessary for the journey. And the student, while waiting for him listened to a very illuminating literary discussion between two of the neighbouring shopkeepers. The student decided then to stay in Baghdad saying «A city of such cultural standard should not be abandoned.».<sup>4</sup>

#### E. Houses of Learned Men

Homes were not considered convenient places for public teaching as neither the householders nor students would find comfort in forming reading circles in private houses. This is confirmed by the following verse of the *Qur'ân*: « O ye who believe! enter not the houses of the Prophet excepting when permission is given to you for food, and sit not down waiting for its cooking being finished, but when you are called, then go in, and when you have taken your food, then disperse, and sit not down to listen to talk. Surely this gave annoyance to the Prophet but he considered it a shame to mention it to you, but God is not ashamed of the truth».<sup>5</sup> The same idea was repeated and explained by al-"Ab-

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(1) Saiyid Amîr "Alî, *A short history of the Saracens*, 569 at foot.

(2) Al-Aghânî : Vol. III, p. 129

(3) Al-Subkî *Tabaqât al-Shâfi'iyyah*, Vol. II, p. 168

(4) Abu al-Hâj, *al-Alif Bâ' li al-Alibbâ'* MS. Bayzid, Istanbul 5336, p. 147 A.

(5) *Sûrah* : 33, verse 53. See the commentary of al-Fakhr al-Râzî VII : 347 and of abu al-Su"ûd on the margin of al-Râzî VI : 532—533.

dari as follows: « The best place for public education is the mosque. It is open to all people who wish to attend. Unlike the mosque, the private house is only when necessary<sup>1</sup> used for education and that with the permission of the householder and even so those who are admitted should keep quiet and adapt themselves to the home etiquette.»<sup>2</sup>

Under certain circumstances, however education was conducted in many private houses:

Before the establishment of mosques, the house was the only place for Islamic teaching. The house of al-Arqam was chosen at the beginning of Islam to be the centre for the new religion, and there the Prophet explained the doctrines of the Faith, and many people were converted to Islam.<sup>3</sup>

The Islamic education was, carried on, too, in the Prophet's houses until the above restriction was imposed, as indicated by the verse just quoted, which was inspired in Medina after the establishment of mosques.

Even when mosques had been founded, many private houses were used in the Muslim community as centres of education:

The universal scholar, Avicenna, was engaged during the day with the work of his administrative post under Shams al-Dawlah. His evenings, however, were devoted to study and the promotion of knowledge. He used to sit in his house to read from *al-Shifâ'* or from *al-Qânûn* to a great gathering.<sup>4</sup>

Abû Sulaiman, al Sijistânî Muhammad b. Tâhir b. Bahrâm who died shortly before the close of the 4th. century A. H., was a leper and one-eyed, so he ceased to appear in public. But his house was a resort of students and scholars, who devoted themselves to the cause of learning and who flocked to attend his lectures.<sup>5</sup> In the biography of Abu al-Hasan al-Munajjim, al-

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(1) Al-'Abdari : *Al-Madkhal* II, p. 97

(2) *Ibid.*, I, p. 85.

(3) Al-Tabari : *Tārīkh al-Uman wa al-Mulūk* : Ser. III, p. 2335

(4) Al-Qiftî p. 420 Ibn Abi Usaibi'ah II, p. 4

(5) Al-Qiftî : *Akhbâr al-Hukamâ'* pp. 282-283.

Qifrî says that Abu al-*Hasan* was a friend of Abû Sulaimân and used to go very often to the latter's house, in which the chief learned men would gather to study and discuss many subjects, under the supervision and guidance of Abû Sulaimân.<sup>1</sup> In addition to Abu al-*Hasan* this meeting was usually attended by Abû Muhammad al-Muqaddisî, Abû al-Fatḥ al-Nûshajânî, Abû Zakariyyâ al-Saimarî, Abû Bakr al-Qawmasî, Ghulam Zuhai (d. 376 A. H.), Abû Hayyân al-Tawḥîdî (d. 400 A. H.) and other members of less importance.<sup>2</sup> Abû Hayyân says each one of these was unrivalled in his particular field of knowledge.<sup>3</sup> Fortunately, a great part of the debates and discussions held in this house is preserved in al-Muqâbasât<sup>4</sup> and in al-Imtâ' wa al-Mu'ânasâ<sup>5</sup> of Abû Hayyân.

When al-Ghazâlî (d. 504 A. H.) returned from his journey to Mecca and Damascus, he taught for a short time in al-Nizâmiyyâ of Nishâbûr. Then he retired and went to his town Tûs in which he sat to teach theology in his house. His time was divided between worshipping and teaching.<sup>6</sup>

"Alî b. Muhammad al-Fasîhî (d. 516 A.H.) was a famous teacher in al-Nizamiyya, but he had a Shi'a tendency. When questioned about these opinions he confessed, and was therefore dismissed. He continued his teaching in his house whither the students also came.<sup>7</sup>

Ya'qûb b. Killis (d. 380 A.H.) the minister of al-'Azîz bi Allâh al-Fârimî, was a good Ismâ'îlî scholar. He wrote a long book about Ismâ'îlî jurisprudence containing all that he had heard from al-Mu'izz and al-'Azîz. His house was, on

(1) Ibid pp. 224, 225.

(2) Abû Hayyân : *al-Muqâbasât*, p. 120.

(3) *Ibid*.

(4) See for instance, pp. 120-138, 292, 293-301, 319-327, 355-358.

(5) See for example, Vol. I, pp. 40, 41. II, 18, 23, 24, 43. III, 99, 124, 125.

(6) The biography of al-Ghazâlî in the beginning of his book *Al-Ihyâ'*, p. 3.

(7) Yâqût : *Mu'jam al-Udabâ'*, Vol. V, p. 415.



Fridays' a focus of learning to which men learned in different branches of knowledge would flock to listen to his lectures.<sup>1</sup>

Al-Salafî Ahmad b. Muhammad Abû Tâhir (d. 576 A. H. ) was a poor scholar. He moved from one place to another and lastly he arrived in Alexandria where he married a wealthy lady. His house there was a haunt of seekers after knowledge. At the close of the third volume of his selection from the Traditions al-Salafî says: « I have finished it reading and listening together with Ishâq and Hamad, the sons of Ahmad b. Mûsâ al-Marwazânî in my house at Alexandria in 513 A. H.<sup>2</sup>

Undoubtedly many private houses were utilised as schools in Muslim territories. However, as the house is a special place and the visitor feels uneasy, it is the duty of the owner to meet him with cordiality and to welcome him in order that he may feel at ease and come regularly to attend the lectures so that these lectures would be useful.<sup>3</sup>

#### F. Literary Salons

It may be of interest to link the literary salons, which flourished in the Islamic world from the Abbasids' time with the old meeting held under the four Orthodox caliphs. In theory, the caliph was considered not only a secular leader but also a spiritual guide, and he should be a man of wide knowledge.<sup>4</sup> So the Orthodox caliphs, who had been legally chosen, were often questioned in private or in public on religious points; though in cases of perplexity the caliph would seek the advice of other companions. Apart from the promotion of knowledge in both the old meetings and the literary salons, everything was completely changed. In the old meetings anyone might join or leave the

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(1) Al-Maqrîzî : *al-Khitat* II : 341.

(2) MS. in private possession which Professor A. J. Arberry kindly showed me, see also *Tadhkirat al-Huffâz*, vol. IV, p. 93.

(3) Al-'Abdârî : *al-Madkhal* : II : pp. 97, 98,

(4) Al-Mâwardî : *al-Ahkâm al-Sultâniyyah*, p. 5, al-Fakhri : *al-Adâb al-Sultâniyyah*, pp. 20, 21.

meeting according to his own wish; the caliph was to be addressed by his bare name or by the title « Commander of the Faithful » ; the gathering used to sit upon a humble carpet or mat or even upon the ground. <sup>1</sup>

In the literary salons foreign customs and civilizations manifested themselves; salons were highly prepared; <sup>2</sup> only people of certain classes were admitted; <sup>3</sup> the members had to come at fixed times and leave according to particular signs adopted by the caliphs; <sup>4</sup> the caliph, and no one else, would open the discussion, <sup>5</sup> and lastly the subjects debated in the literary salons were very much wider than those in the old meetings.

Al-Sâbî and Kushâjim give us interesting details concerning the etiquette observed by the people attending the Caliph's salons. These details can be summed up as follows:

A person coming to the caliph's presence must be very clean, well dressed and dignified in his gait and bearing. <sup>6</sup> When seeing the caliph he should greet him saying « Peace upon you, O Commander of the Faithful ». Ministers and people of high rank, then, may be offered the Caliph's hand to kiss, but members of the Royal Family and learned men are exempted by their status from hand-kissing. <sup>7</sup> Each person must keep to the place allotted to people of his class. When sitting, he must focus his attention on the Caliph and stir as little as possible. He is instructed to learn that, in order to win the full respect of society, he should try to simulate a solid body which during the time of the meeting should not require to take in or to pass out

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(1) Zaidân : *Târikh al-Tamaddun al-Islâmi*, vol. V, p. 131.

(2) For the East, see *al-'Iqd al-Farid*, vol. IV, p. 101 and 103, for the West ( Andalusia ), see *Nafh al-Tib*, vol. II, p. 1128, and for Egypt, see *al-Khitat*, vol. I. pp. 385, 386.

(3) See al-Jâhiz : *al-Tâj fi Akhlâq al-Mulûk*, p. 21.

(4) See these signs in *al-Taj*, p. 119, 120.

(5) Al-Jâhiz : *al-Taj*, pp. 49, 50. It is related that Ahmad b. Abi Dâwûd was the first who dared to begin the conversation with a Caliph. ( Ibn Khallikân I : 31. )

(6) Al-Sâbî : *Rusûm Dar al-Khilâfah* p. 46 MS. Baghdad.

(7) *Ibid.* pp. 45- 46, abridged.

anything, though the former is less heinous than the latter.<sup>1</sup> The Caliph opens the talk and whenever he speaks everyone must take heed so that he may not need to ask for repetition, which is regarded as rude.<sup>2</sup> The person taking part in the discussion must speak quietly, and must avoid harsh words and obscure expressions.<sup>3</sup> Moreover he is expected not to interrupt any speaker nor to show that he already knows what another speaker is saying.<sup>4</sup>

The caliphs considered themselves patrons of knowledge and their palaces were thought about as centres for the improvement of learning. With this in mind al-Mu'tadid bi Aliâh, when planning for the foundation of a new palace al-Shammâsiyyah in Baghdad ordered special wings in which the study of various subjects should be conducted.<sup>5</sup>

The literary salons started almost with the existence of the palaces. Mu'âwiya called in learned persons to read and discuss with him the history of the Arabs and their famous battles, the history of foreign kings and their governments, the work of administrative bodies and the running of kingdoms in general.<sup>6</sup> This type of knowledge was required by Mu'awiya's position as a founder of a new dynasty and new régime, and therefore this course was imitated by Abû Ja'far al-Mansûr who was in a similar position.<sup>7</sup>

Other literary meetings are recorded to have been held by 'Abd al-Malik who supervised them and on one occasion gave a prize to Suwaid b. Ghaflah who was a winner in a debate.<sup>8</sup> On another occasion, under 'Abd al-Malik, too, a bedouin was

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(1) Al-Sâbi : *Rusûm Dâr al-Khilâfah* pp. 50-51 MS.

(2) *Ibid.* p. 53 and Kushâjim : *Adab al-Nadim* p. 23.

(3) Kushâjim : *Adab al-Nadim* p. 24.

(4) *Ibid.* p. 23.

(5) Al-Maqrîzî : *al-Khitat*, vol. II, p. 363.

(6) Al-Mas'ûdî ed. Barbier De Meynard, vol. V, p. 77, 78.

(7) Zaidân : *Tarikh al-Tamaddun al-Islami*, vol. V, p. 139.

(8) Al-'Amilî : *al-Kashkul*, p.155.

the outstanding figure in the gathering. He was asked by the caliph to recite the best laudatory line of poetry which had ever been composed by an Arab. He replied:

Are ye not the best of those who ride on camel,

More generous-handed than all others in the World.

He was then asked to recite the bitterest line that had been said in defamation. He answered:

Lower thy gaze seeing that thou art of Numayr.

No peer of Ka'b nor yet Kilâb.

Thirdly the caliph asked him to say best line which had been composed in pride. In his reply he said:

Once thou art hated by Banû Tamîm,

thou wilt find thyself disliked by all the people.

These lines and others which were recited in the course of that discussion were composed by Jarîr who was present and who was so pleased that he asked for his prize to be transferred to the bedouin, but the caliph instead, gave Jarîr his usual prize and gave the bedouin twice as much as to Jarîr.<sup>1</sup>

At the time of al-Walid I there was a sharp rivalry between "Adiy b. al Riqâ" and Kuthayyir, but it happened that both attended the same meeting in al-Walid's palace. When the former began to recite a poem prepared for the occasion, Kuthayyir started criticizing it bitterly line by line. After a few lines "Adiy failed to continue because all the people in the assembly showed their aversion since they had been influenced by Kuthayyir's criticism.<sup>2</sup>

Shortly after the rise of the Abbasid dynasty, literary salons in the true sense reached their height, and regular meetings were arranged not only in the caliphs' palaces but in the palaces of their ministers as well. Reading about these literary salons, one can imagine the splendour and magnificence of these meetings which exemplify the prosperity and the manysided culture of the period. The literary salons had the highest status

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(1) See the whole story in *al-Aghânî*, vol. VII, pp. 54, 55.

(2) *Al-Aghânî* VIII : 183.



of all kinds of meeting which flourished at that time. <sup>1</sup>

The period of most vigorous activity began at the time of al-Rashîd (d. 193 A.H.) who was excellently educated, and in his presence poetical contests, religious debates and literary conferences were often held. <sup>2</sup> The poets Abû Nuwâs, Abû al-"Atahiya, Di"bil, Muslim b. al-Walîd and "Abbâs b. al-Ahnaf; the musicians Ibrâhîm of Mawsil and his son Ishâq; the philologists Abû "Ubayda, al-Asma"î and al-Kisâ"î; the preacher Ibn al-Sammâk and the historian al-Wâqidi, these are but a few names in the galaxy of talent which al-Rashîd gathered around him at Baghdâd. <sup>3</sup>

It was in al-Rashîd's time that the famous grammatical debate between Sibawayh and al-Kisâ"î took place. The debate is known as the question of the wasp and in it al-Kisâ"î was supported by his student al-Amîn. The debate was held in a political atmosphere and so al-Kisâ"î was unjustly considered the victor. <sup>4</sup>

The most interesting contest in the presence of al-Rashîd took place between the grammarian al-Kisâ"î and the theologian Abu Yûsuf in which the former, using grammatical rules, solved theological problems and answered many juridical questions. <sup>5</sup>

At the same time Yahyâ b. Khâlid arranged regular conferences for philosophers and the eminent figures in scholastic theology for free discussions about points mostly connected with "Ilm al-Kalâm. <sup>6</sup>

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- (1) It is recorded that Ishâq of Mowsil, the famous singer, asked the caliph al-Ma'mûn to allow him to join the learned men in their assembly with the caliph rather than the singers. Al-Ma'mûn who believed that Ishâq was a man of letters, too, accepted this request. *Al-Aghânî* V : 60.
  - (2) *Hitti : The History of the Arabs* : 413.
  - (3) *Nicholson : A Literary History of the Arabs*, p. 261.
  - (4) Ibn Khillikân, vol. I, p. 549 and *Majâlis 'Abî Muslim* 2 B, 3 A. MS. Egypt.
  - (5) "Abd al-Rahmân al-Anbârî : *Tabaqât al-Udabâ'*, pp. 91—92.
  - (6) *Zaidân : Tarikh al-Tamaddun al-Islâmî* : V : 142, 143.

«The reign of al-Ma'mûn has been called the Augustan period of Arabian literature. The caliph himself was a scholar and he selected for his companions the most eminent scholars from the East and the West. Masters, instructors, translators and commentators formed his court». <sup>1</sup> «His court was crowded with men of science and letters, with poets, physicians and philosophers from every part of the civilized world and of diverse creeds and nationalities». <sup>2</sup>

It was normal for the caliph to take a leading part in the debate: Once al-Ma'mûn asked the scholars in his assembly whether any one of them could recite a line of a poem which indicated that the poet must have been a king. No satisfactory reply was given and then he recited from al-Walîd b. Yazid's poetry: To me people's loyalty, to them my overwhelming liberality. <sup>3</sup>

The literary salons profited by the excellent progress of knowledge at that time and so the discussion involved numerous subjects. The salient question of the time was about the *Qur'ân* and whether it had been created or not. It was raised by al-Mu'tazilah and almost all the eminent persons in the Islamic world took part in that dispute on one side or the other. <sup>4</sup>

Under al-Wâthiq, one of the literary debates took place between Mukhâriq, and Husain b. al-Dahhâk in which the former alleged that Abu al-'Atâhiya excelled Bashshâr whilst Husain alleged the opposite. Each of the debaters defended his view and then Abu al-Muhallam, who had been appointed by al-Wâthiq to judge the debate, gave his decision. <sup>5</sup>

When many independent or semi-independent dynasties arose

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(1) Hughes : *Dictionary of Islâm*, pp. 295, 296.

(2) Sayid Amîr 'Ali : *A Short History of the Saracens*, 278.

(3) Al-Aghânî : VI : 119 and the line in Arabic is :

لي المحض من ودهم واليهـم نائي

See also the sectarian disputation between al-Ma'mûn and 'Ali al Rida : *Uyûnal-Akhabâr* : II : 140, 141.

(4) See examples of those debates in *Tabaqât al-Shâfi'iyya*, vol. I, pp. 205—215.

(5) *Al-Aghânî* VI : 186.

in the Islamic world, they vied with each other in the patronage of learning. So the new courts and palaces were indeed centres of culture.<sup>1</sup> They served the same purpose as is served now by Universities.<sup>2</sup> Space does not allow me to speak in detail about the various literary salons which flourished at that time and therefore only a brief account will be given.

The literary salon of the Vizir Abû al-Faḍl b. Jaʿfar Ibn al-Furât, in one of its meetings in 326 A. H. was attended by: al-Khâlidî, Ibn al-Ikhshâd, al-Kutbî, Ibn Abî Bishr, Ibn Rabâh, Ibn Kaʿb, Qudâmah b. Jaʿfar, al-Zuhri, ʿAli b. ʿIsâ al-Jarrâh, Ibn Firâs, Ibn Rashîd, Ibn ʿAbd al-ʿAzîz al-Hashimî, Ibn Yahya al-ʿAlawî, Abû Saʿîd al-Sirâfî, an ambassador of Ibn Tughj, al-Merzabânî of the Sâsânîds and Mattâ. Ibn al-Furât opened the talk addressing all except the last. He asked whether anyone of them was ready to debate with Mattâ on the importance of logic, but he got no reply. Then he said, «I believe that many of you can successfully debate this question», and turning to al-Sirâfî he continued «O Abû Saʿîd, you take the position». Abû Saʿîd accepted and a long and interesting debate commenced. I refer the reader to *al-Imtâʿ wa al-Muʿânasah* of Abû Hayyân, Vol. I, p.p 109 --- 122, for the whole discussion; but here I quote one question out of many to which the debate led:

Abû Saʿîd: What do you say about the following sentence:

Zaid is the best of the brothers?

Mattâ: It is correct.

Abû Saʿîd: What do you say about: Zaid is the best of his brothers?

Mattâ: It is correct too.

Abû Saʿîd: You are wrong; the first is right and the second is wrong.

Mattâ: Why?

Abû Saʿîd: This is not the place to learn that. if you attend the

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(1) See Khudâ Bukhsh : *Contribution to the History of Islamic Civilization*, p. 184.

(2) Ahmad Amîn : *Zuhr al-Islâm*, p. 287.

circle, you will benefit. <sup>1</sup>

Speaking about *al-Imtâ' wa al-Mu'ânasah* will lead us to the salon of Ibn Sa'dân ( d. 375 A. H. ) the minister of Samsâm al-Dawlah. «Ibn Sa'dân asked the great *littérateur* Abu Hayyân al-Tawhîdî (d. 1009 A. D.) to spend his evenings in his company, they discussed such subjects as the condition of man, the nature of the soul, the character of important contemporaries, the outstanding qualities of the Arabs as compared to other nationalities, the relative usefulness to the ruler of accountancy and stylistics and the superiority of grammar over logic. <sup>2</sup> » All these discussions were later collected in *al-Imtâ' wa al-Mu'ânasah* as a response to the request of Abû al-Wafâ'al-Muhandis ( d. 387 A. H. ) <sup>3</sup> Ibn Sa'dân had a literary salon which was usually attended by the eminent scholars of the age. He was proud of his group and thought that his assembly excelled all corresponding literary meetings. « This party is unequalled and matchless », he said, « surely the gathering of al-Muhallabî does not equal in value a single one of our friends, those of Ibn al-'Amîd wish to obtain the level of our youngest member and Ibn 'Abbad's group knows nothing except false argument ». <sup>4</sup>

Under the sub-title «The circle of Sayf al-Dawla», Professor Gibb says: «For a few years the main current of Arabic literature lies in Northern Syria, at Aleppo, the seat of a tiny Arab dynasty, the Shi'a Hamdanids. Round Sayf al-Dawla gathered a company rarely matched for many-sided brilliance. His generosity attracted nearly all the leading men of letters of the day and won for his name an enduring reputation». <sup>5</sup>

«Mahmûd of Ghazna ardently desired the glory and pres-

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(1) Abû Hayyân : *al-Imtâ' wa al-Mu'ânasah*, vol. I, pp. 118-120.

(2) Von Grunebaum : *The Journal of General Education*, Vol. IV, No. 1, October 1949.

(3) Ahmad Amin : *The Introduction of al-Imtâ' wa al-Mu'ânasah*.

(4) Abû Hayyân : *al-Sadâqah wa al-Sadiq*, p. 33.

(5) Gibb : *Arabic Literature*, p. 61.



tige accruing to a sovereign whose court formed the rallying-point of all that was best in the literary and scientific culture of the day». <sup>1</sup> « His assemblage of literary genius included the Arab historian al-'Utbi, the celebrated scientific and historical author al-Bairûni and the illustrious Persian poet al-Firdawsî » <sup>2</sup>

A little later al-Ghazâlî debated in the presence of Nizâm al-Mulk and having won the debate he was appointed a professor in al-Nizâmiyya of Baghdâd. <sup>3</sup>

In Nûr al-Dîn's court, the learned men had great assemblies. Besides the native eminent persons the foreign scholars were invited even from long distances to come and study under his patronage. <sup>4</sup>

We turn now to Egypt to devote a small space to the description of the literary salons there. From the time of the Tûlûnîds, the first independent dynasty to reign over Egypt since the coming of the Arabs, the literary salons made their start. Ibn Zûlâq says that at the time of the Tûlûnîds and Ikhshîds there were no schools and lessons were given in the houses of princes, ministers and learned men. <sup>5</sup>

In the Ikhshîd's court a historical study took place every night, and in that court Kâfûr received his education <sup>6</sup> and reached such a high standard of culture that he was entrusted with al-Ikhshîd's sons to educate. <sup>7</sup> Later when Kâfûr occupied the same position which had been occupied by his master, he became a patron of knowledge and his literary salon was ador-

(1) Nicholson : *A Literary History of the Arabs*, p. 269.

(2) Hitti : *History of the Arabs*, p. 465.

(3) The biography of al-Ghazali in the beginning of *al-Ihyâ'*, I : 3.

(4) Jamal al-Dîn b. Wâsil : *Mufarrij al-Kurûb fi Akhbâr Banî Ayyûb*, p. 165. MS. Cambridge University Library, No. I.I. 1. 6.

(5) Ibn Zûlâq : *Akhbâr Sibawaih al Misri*, p. 19.

(6) Dr. Hasan Ibrahim : *Tarikh al-Islam al-Syâsi*, vol. III, p. 239

(7) Ibn Khillikân : I, 614.

ned by having al-Mutanabbî amongst its men of letters. <sup>1</sup>

At any rate the salons of the Tûlûnîds and Ikhshîds were eclipsed by the illustrious salons of the Fatimids. The Fatimid caliphs frequently held learned disputations at which the professors of the academies appeared divided according to their different faculties, logicians, jurists, mathematicians and physicians, dressed in their Khil'a or doctoral mantles. <sup>2</sup>

Tuesdays were appointed for the literary salons of Ibn Killîs which were attended by jurists, scholastic theologians and the dialecticians. Discussion and debate normally took place among these learned people. <sup>3</sup>

One of al-Hakim's salons was held in 403 A. H. to which the famous scholars of arithmetic, logic, jurisprudence, medicine and other sciences were invited. There they debated and discussed many points and at the conclusion the caliph awarded them robes of honour and valuable prizes. <sup>4</sup>

The court of al-Malik al-Sâlih Talâ'î b. Zuraik attracted the scholars of the time, in describing whom 'Imârah al-Yamani says: «Each of these scholars was an eminent man of excellent knowledge and dignified personality. I adopted their methods and profited by their progress until they admitted me to their meetings». <sup>5</sup> These meetings were frequently held and al-Malik al-Salih would very often recite from his own poetry. <sup>6</sup> On a certain occasion one of the gathering recited a verse of sound sense but colloquially expressed. Then al-Malik al-Salih suggested that each member of the group should put this meaning into a good verse. In a short time several excellent verses were composed and one by al-Malik al-Salih himself of surpassing beauty. <sup>7</sup>

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(1) Moh. "Inân : *al-Hâkim bi Amr allâh*, p. 230.

(2) Sayid Amir 'Alî : *A Short History of the Saracens*, 614

(3) Al-Maqrîzî : *al-Khitat* II, p. 341.

(4) Dr. Hasan Ibrâhîm : *al-Fatimiyyûn fî Misr* p. 137.

(5) 'Imârah : *al-Nukat al-'Asriyyah*, p. 25.

(6) Ibn Taghrî Bardî : *al-Nujûm al-Zâhirah* V, p. 313.

(7) 'Alî b. Zâfir : *Badâ'i* " *al-Badâ'ih* p. 133.

A literary meeting was held in the house of al-Qâdî *al-Fâdîl* and among the people attending were the prince "Izz al-Dîn Furukhshâh and the learned Tâj al-Dîn al-Kindî . The latter showed his brilliance so that "Izz al-Dîn took him to his palace, prepared a magnificent apartment for him and from that time Tâj al-Dîn became one of the shining lights in the Ayyûbid salons.<sup>1</sup>

Under the Mamluks, the activities of the literary salons continued and I need only mention the interesting collection of debates, edited by Dr. "Abd al-Wahhâb "Azzam under the title: «*Majâlis al-Sultân al-Ghûrî*». <sup>2</sup>

### G. The Desert

Arabic was the vehicle of the knowledge and culture of the pre-Islamic Arabs; it was the vessel of their poetry, orations and proverbs. Having the greatest admiration for literary expression, the Arab community was led in war as well as in peace by poets and orators. This high appreciation of their language by the Arabs continued or even increased under Islam as the Prophet was a descendant of a pure Arab family and the *Qur'ân* is in Arabic.

The Arabic language accompanied Muslim troops marching on Byzantine and Persian territories and the victory of Islam was the victory of the language. But this wide diffusion of Arabic was not altogether to its advantage since it led to corruptions, which will be explained below.

Two facts should be emphasized here, as upon them this section is based:

1. The history of the corruption of the Arabic language although on a limited scale, preceded the conquest of foreign realms. It was due to commercial intercourse between Arabs and non-Arabs.
2. These mistakes were looked upon as a great disgrace which could never be excused.

In the presence of the Prophet, an Arab made an idioma-

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(1) Dahman, *al-Maqsûrah al-Tâjiyyah*, p. 11

(2) Cairo, 1941.

tic mistake; then the Prophet, addressing the people round him, said: «Instruct your brother as he has strayed.»<sup>1</sup>

From the time of "Umar onwards, the intercourse between Arabs and foreigners was very extensive. The capitals of the Islamic Empire: Medîna, Damascus and later Baghdâd were cosmopolitan places. Other cities like Kûfa and Basra had a great number of foreigners especially the crowds of Iranian prisoners of war who were converted to Islâm.<sup>2</sup> Many wives were of foreign nationality and intermarriage was gradually increasing. Besides the permanent mingling in cities, towns and homes, pilgrims of various races gathered annually for quite a long time in the Holy Places. Arabic was, of course, the *lingua franca*, but as it was impossible for foreigners to observe the complicated rules of the Arabic tongue, a new and broken Arabic language sprang up.<sup>3</sup> Al-Jâhiz calls it «the language of half-breeds (*al-Muwalladin*) and common people.»<sup>4</sup>

Before going any further I propose to mention some anecdotes which illustrate the history of the corruption and the shame which the mistakes brought:

In a letter sent to "Umar b. al-Khattâb by al-Husain b. al-Harr through his secretary: the former discovered a mistake in the letter. He sent to al-Husain asking him to give his amanuensis one lash on the whip.<sup>5</sup>

A bedouin once entered a market in which he found that the correct language was slightly neglected by the traders. Then he said: «My goodness! They earn their living even though committing such mistakes!».<sup>6</sup>

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(1) Ahmad Amin : *Duha al-Islâm* : II : 252.

(2) Wellhausen : *The Arab Kingdom and its Fall*, translated by Margaret Weir, p. 71.

(3) Ibn al-Anbârî : *Tabaqât al-'Udabâ'*, p. 1 and p. 10.

(4) *Al-Bayân wa al-Tabyîn*, vol. I : p. 68

(5) Al-Jâhiz : *al-Bayân*, vol. II, p. 4, ed. 1311.

(6) Ibn Qutaiba : *"Uyun al-Akhbâr* II, 159, Ibn "Abd al-Barr : *Adab al-Mujâlasah* MS Egypt 55 A.



Once while Ziyâd was settling disputes between the people under him, a man came and complained against his brother who had usurped the whole inheritance of their father recently deceased. The man was guilty of many solecisms in pleading and thus Ziyâd said to him: «What you have lost in your language is more serious and harmful than the lost wealth». <sup>1</sup>

On his ring, Bashîr b. "Ubaidî'l-lâh wrote the following sentence: «Bashîr b. "Ubaidî'l-lâh is not a polytheist», but it was not idiomatically correct. On seeing that, his father declared that it was more disgraceful than polytheism. <sup>2</sup>

It is related that Maslamah b. "Abd al-Malik said: «Mistakes in talk are uglier than smallpox on a face». <sup>3</sup>

Lastly when al-Hassan knew that a certain leader used to make linguistic mistakes he declared that this leader should be dismissed immediately. <sup>4</sup>

Ibn Khaldûn speaks about the genius «*Malakah*» of the Arabs which was affected by the intercourse between them and non-Arabs. <sup>5</sup> Indeed we have a record about early Arabs, even of high standing, and well-educated persons who fell into such mistakes. We mention for example al-Walid I, al-Hajjâj, Abû Hanîfâ, Bishr al-Marrisî and Shabîb b. Shaibâh among others. <sup>6</sup> In some cases the mistakes occurred in reading the *Qur'ân* and very often these mistakes changed the meaning completely, and would even imply, if they had been intended, that the reader was an infidel. <sup>7</sup>

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(1) Al-Jâhiz : *al-Bayân* II : 5, ed. 1311

(2) Al-Jâhiz : *al-Bayân* II : 112.

(3) Ibn Qutaiba : *"Uyûn al-Akhbâr* II : 158 and Ibn "Abd al-Barr 55 A.

(4) Ibn "Abd Rabbihi : *al-"Iqd al-Farid* : II : 18.

(5) *Al-Muqaddimah*, 403.

(6) See *al-"Iqd al-Farid* II : 18-20, Ibn Qutaiba II : 159, *al-Bayân* II : 3—5, ed. 1311.

(7) Ibn al-Anbârî : *Tabaqât al-Udabâ'*, p. 8, *al-Bayân* : II : 113—114 : e. g. The verse ... Allâh ... *Al-Musawwir* was read ... *Al-Musawwar*.

Meanwhile the *Bâdiya*, which did not attract foreigners, became the only home of the correct language. As bedouins stayed alone in the desert, they naturally preserved the pure Arabic race and the pre-Islamic tongue. In the grammatical debate between al-Kisâ'i and Sibawaih, already mentioned, the gathering declared that the view of a bedouin upon the disputed question would be a final decision. A bedouin was brought but was asked by al-Amin to uphold the side of al-Kisâ'i, who was wrong. The bedouin accepted the principle of supporting al-Kisâ'i but expressed his fear that his tongue might not obey him. <sup>1</sup>

Hence the bedouins were the people from whom the correct language could be learnt. They took advantage of their position and flocked to the cities and towns and there they sat to teach. Ibn al-Nadim gives us a full account of the famous bedouins who adopted this profession. Of these we refer to:

Abu al-Baidâ al-Rabâhî who came to al-Basra and there he taught mostly the children in return for fees. <sup>2</sup>

Abû Jâmûs: Thawr b. Yazîd who entered al-Basra, too, and from him Ibn al-Muqaffa" learnt eloquence. <sup>3</sup>

Abu al-"Umaithil "Abd Allâh b. Khulaid who went to Khurâsân, and there he was the tutor of "Abd Allâh b. Tahir's sons. <sup>4</sup>

"Abd Allâh b. "Amr b. Abî Subhî: came to Baghdad and many of the well-known learned men were his pupils. <sup>5</sup>

The majority of the people in the cities and towns were satisfied in forming a circle round a bedouin and listening to him, but persons of wealth, such as princes, as well as ambitious scholars went to *al-Bâdiya* itself which acted at that time as a sort of school. <sup>6</sup> They wanted to avoid listening to the broken

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(1) Ibn Khallikân : I : 549

(2) *Al-Fihrist*, p. 66.

(3) *Ibid*, 67

(4) *Ibid*. 72.

(5) *Ibid*. 73.

(6) *Encyclopaedia of Education*, III, p. 1112

language which spread all round them and at the same time to live for some years in the home of the Arabic tongue. «To the early Umayyad princes», Hitti says «*the Bâdiya* — Syrian desert — acted as a school to which they sent their young sons to acquire the pure Arabic tongue and become well versed in poetry. It was thither that Mu'awiya sent his son and future successor Yazid»<sup>1</sup> Al-Walid b. 'Abd al-Malik had not been sent to *al-Bâdiya*. Thus he very often made mistakes<sup>2</sup> and his father is recorded to have said: «It hurts us that our love to al-Walid prevented him from being sent to *al-Bâdiya*.»<sup>3</sup> Not only the Umayyad princes but some of the Abbasids such as al Mu'tasim, were sent too to *al-Bâdiya* for the same purpose.<sup>4</sup>

Of the great number of learned men who flocked to this school to learn from the bedouins, we mention these famous names:

Al-Khalîl b. Ahmad (d. 160)<sup>5</sup> who was asked on one occasion: from where he had obtained his wide knowledge. In his reply he said: «From the *Bawâdî* of al-Hijâz, Najd and Tihâmah.»<sup>5</sup>

Bashshâr b. Burd (d. 167) was the only poet of his time who did not fall, even once, into a linguistic mistake. In giving the reasons for this superiority over all his contemporaries, he said: «Here I was born and grew up among eighty eloquent Shaikhs of Banû'Uqail and among their ladies, who even excelled the men in their eloquence. No one of this community makes mistakes. When I was adolescent I went to *al-Bâdiya* and stayed there until my manhood. How then could I make mistakes?»<sup>6</sup>

Al-Kisâ'î (d. 182) went to *al-Bâdiya* and used fifteen bottles of ink in writing of the bedouins, apart from what he memorised.<sup>7</sup>

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(1) *The History of the Arabs* : 253

(2) See *al-'Iqd al-Farîd* : II : 18.

(3) *Ibid.* II : 19.

(4) *Ibid.* I : 365

(5) Ibn al-Anbârî : *Tabaqât al-Udabâ'*, 83

(6) *Al-Aghânî* III : 26.

(7) Ibn al-Anbârî : *Tabaqât al-Udabâ'*, 83—84.

Al-Shâfi'î (d. 204) left Mecca for *al-Bâdiya* and joined the tribe of Hudhail, with whom he stayed until he had learnt eloquence and adopted their customs, a period of seventeen years. <sup>1</sup>

Al-Riyâshî Abu al-Fazl al-'Abbâs b. al-Faraj. (d. 257) expressed his pride to have taken his knowledge from the wild bedouins while others extracted their learning from civilized persons. <sup>2</sup>

Besides the correct language used by all the inhabitants of the desert, the outstanding figures of the bedouins sat there and read good poetry and the ancient history of the Arabs to the audience who gathered round them. Abû Malik, 'Amr b. Kararah, Abû Tharwân al-'Ukli and Abu al-Hindâm Kilâb b. Hamzah are but a few examples of those teachers. <sup>3</sup>

#### H. The Mosque

We come now to the main place for Muslim teaching. Since the early time of Islam, *Halqas* have been held in the mosque, and centuries have passed and witnessed this flourishing activity up to the present period without any break. As Muslim education of the first few decades consisted largely of religious instruction based on religious doctrines it was proper that mosques, which were intended for worship, should be used for teaching purposes.

Early Muslims felt an urgent need for a place in which to carry on their religion. They may have been influenced by the fact that religious services were held in monasteries and churches in their neighbourhood. More probably, however, the foundation of mosques owes its origin to the existence of the ancient religious building of the Arabs (the Sacred House). It was regarded as the house of God and thither people made their

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(1) Yâqût : *Mu'jam al-'Udabâ'*, VI, 369

(2) See his words in Ibn al-Nadîm, 86.

(3) Ibn al-Nadîm, 66, 69, 122 respectively.



pilgrimages, and there religious rites were conducted.<sup>1</sup> *Al-Bait al-Harâm* was to all the Arabs, whether pagans or monotheists, a sacred place, and after Islam, the Muslims maintained this status and, whenever they could, practised their religion in it.<sup>2</sup> Ibn Hishâm states that the Prophet when emigrating from Mecca looked at this building and said: «In the name of God you are the favourite place in the world to me, and you are the most beloved place in the world to God, and had I not been forced to leave you, I would not have done so».<sup>3</sup> It was natural then, that Muslims should found a similar place for the purpose of worship. Consequently the Prophet, even on his way to al-Medîna, laid the foundation stone of *Masjid Qubâ'*, the first mosque in Islam.<sup>4</sup> When the Prophet reached al-Medîna his mosque was soon established in al-Mirbad,<sup>5</sup> and in this mosque he used to teach his followers imparting religious and secular knowledge to them.<sup>6</sup>

To imagine the importance of the mosque in those days one should remember that mosques were used as political centres, courts of justice, educational institutions and above all as places of worship. So the foundation of a mosque was essential wherever Islam was spreading, and in every place, either conquered or founded, a mosque was built very soon. It is related that "Umar b. al-Kattâb sent to his governors of al-Basra, al-Kûfa, Syria and Egypt, instructing each of them to establish a *Jâmi'* in which all the people of the city would assemble for the Friday prayer. Apart from the *Jâmi'* for the Friday prayer

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(1) Al-Shahrastânî : *al-Milal wa al-Nihal*, pp. 442—443.

(2) Ibn Hishâm I, p. 218.

(3) Al-Suhailî, *al-Rawd al-Unuf* II : p. 3.

(4) Ibn Hishâm II : p. 11, al-Tabarî I : 3, p. 1245 while al-Balâdhurî states that this mosque was founded by the immigrants who preceded the prophet, see p. 17.

(5) Al-Balâdhurî, p. 20, Ibn Hishâm II, p. 13, al-Tabarî I : 3 : 1259.

(6) Al-Bukhârî : *Bâb al-Salâh*.

each tribe was advised to found its own mosque. Hence the number of mosques increased rapidly until Baghdâd had, as al-Ya"qûbî claimed to have counted, 30,000 mosques in the 3rd century A.H.<sup>2</sup>

In Egypt the progress of founding Jâmi"s was slow. "Amr b. al"As founded the *Jâmi"* which bears his name soon after he had conquered the country. Up to 133 A.H. al-Fustât had only "Amr's mosque. In that year "Abd Allâh b. "Alî b. "Abd Allâh b. "Abbâs, leading a detachment of the Abbasid army and marching on Egypt, to which Marwân b. Muhammad had fled, camped in the north of al Fustât. There many buildings were founded, among which was «*Jâmi"* al-"Askar». In the year 265 A.H. Ahmad b. Tûlûn established his mosque in al Qatâ'i"<sup>3</sup> and after that the Friday prayer ceased in *Jâmi"* al-"Askar. In 360 A.H. Jawhar erected the famous mosque of al-Azhâr, and «in 378 it was specially devoted to the use of the learned and became, what it has been ever since, one of the chief universities in Islam». <sup>4</sup> Soon afterwards al "Azîz commenced the establishment of another mosque which was completed by his son and successor al-Hâkim, after whom the mosque was called. Al-Hâkim also built *Jâmi"* al-Maqs and *Jâmi"* Râshidah. When the Ayyûbid dynasty came to power, Cairo possessed only these six *Jâmi"*s.<sup>5</sup>

Besides the *Jâmi"*s for Friday prayer many mosques existed for daily prayers. At the time of Ibn Jubair (d. 614 A.H.) Egypt was astonishingly replete with mosques so that it was stated that Alexandria had 12,000 mosques. Ibn Jubair records that there was no exaggeration in this estimate as he had been

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(1) Al-Maqrîzî : *al-Khitat*, II, p. 246, al-Suyûtî : *Husn al-Muhadarah*. II, p. 149.

(2) Al-Ya"qûbî : *al-Buldân* : p. 250.

(3) See *Tarikh al-Jami"* al-Tûlûnî by Mahmûd "Akhush, p. 24, Cairo 1927.

(4) Lane Poole : *Cairo*, pp. 123, 124.

(5) See al-Maqrîzî : *al-Khitat*, II, pp. 244—245, al-Suyûtî : *Husn al-Muhadarah*. II, p. 148.

able to count four or five mosques from one spot <sup>1</sup>

In the field of education I plan to give some details about a few mosques out of the great number which served this purpose. <sup>2</sup>

*Jâmi' al-Mansûr* : In 145 A.H. work started on the foundation of Baghdâd, *Qasr al Dhahab*, and the mosque of al-Mansûr. <sup>3</sup> The cost of this enterprise was 18,000,000 dinârs. <sup>4</sup> The mosque was rebuilt in al-Rashîd's time, and under al-Mu'tadid, it was extended in order to meet the pressure of people who used to flock to it. <sup>5</sup>

This mosque was the most distinguished school and the goal of all the learned. It was so important that al-Kharîb al-Baghdâdî prayed in the Holy Place for three things, the first of which was to be admitted to teach in it. <sup>6</sup> The Hanbalî students must have taken this mosque as the centre for their activity and teaching throughout the fifth century, for in the year 451 A.H. al-Kharîb al-Baghdâdî mentioned above was attacked and hurt by them. <sup>7</sup> Al-Kisâ'î used to sit in this mosque and teach. Al-Farrâ', al-Ahmar, Ibn al-Sa'dân and al-Akhfash were usually among his audience. <sup>8</sup> A Kufan visitor entered this mosque and there he saw students listening to a Shaikh who was reading pathetic poetry with tears in his eyes. The Kûfan joined the circle, wrote the verse down and learnt that the teacher was Abû al-'Atâhiyah. <sup>9</sup>

In this mosque too, the linguistic work called « Al-Yâqût »

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(1) Ibn Jubair : *al-Rihlah*, p. 43.

(2) I propose to neglect the chronological order and follow our main plan in speaking about Baghdad, Syria and Egypt.

(3) Yâqût : *Mu'jam al-Buldân*, II, 232.

(4) Yâqût : *Mu'jam al-Buldân*, II 235.

(5) Al-Kharîb al-Baghdâdî, I, p. 108

(6) Yâqût : *Mu'jam al-Udaba'*, I, p. 246

(7) *Ibid.*

(8) *Ibid.*, IV, p. 243

(9) Al-Aghânî, III, p. 148.

by Abû "Amr al-Zâhid (d. 345 A.H.) was dictated and revised. The author started lecturing on the subject in al-Muharram 326 A.H. <sup>1</sup>

*Jâmi" Dimashq* : The mosque of Damascus was considered as one of the four wonders of the middle ages.<sup>2</sup> Let us quote some items connected with its foundation to justify this idea, if only to some extent:

The erection of this mosque cost al-Walîd b. "Abd al-Malik seven times the annual revenue of the kingdom.

The mosque took eight years to complete.

Eighteen camels carried bills and documents, connected with the foundation and expenditure.

Six thousand dînârs were spent for buying pulse eaten by the labourers who worked in the mosque.

The mosque had six hundred gold chains to carry pendants and lamps.

It was said that one might see something new and wonderful every day in that mosque even if one were to stay in it for a hundred years.<sup>3</sup> The building, of which I include some photographs (Fig. 1, 2), still creates a magnificent impression, especially the older part.

This mosque was a centre of education. Ibn Jubair reports that many circles existed in this mosque the teachers of which had ample salaries and rations. Mâlikî students mostly Maghribî sat aside in a western corner of the mosque where they received lessons from famous Mâlikî scholars. A *Halqa* whose teacher leaned against a certain pillar in this mosque was richly endowed.<sup>4</sup> To the left of the entrance, called «*Bâb al-Barîd*», a Shâfi" school existed with a water tank in the middle.<sup>5</sup> The students used to escape the crowd and resort to quiet corn-

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(1) Ibn al-Nadîm : *al-Fihrist*, p. 113.

(2) Ibn al-Faqîh : *al-Buldân*, p. 106.

(3) Ibn al-Faqîh : *al-Buldân*, pp. 107—108. See also Yâqût : *Mu"jam al-Buldân* IV, pp. 76—77.

(4) Ibn Jubair : *al-Rihlah*, p. 272.

(5) *Ibid.*, p. 271.



ers arranged for quiet studies and home work.<sup>1</sup> A very big circle was formed round al-Khaṭīb al-Baghdādī in this mosque and it is related to have attracted a numerous audience.<sup>2</sup>

*Jāmi' 'Amr* : It was erected in the year 21 A.H. and renewed and extended many times.<sup>3</sup> As early as the year 38 A.H. Sulaimān b. 'Itr sat in it to settle disputes and to preach with *al-Qasas*.<sup>4</sup> From then the mosque continued to be a centre of education and a court of justice. Al-Maqrizī reports that before a certain pestilence, Jāmi' 'Amr used to have some forty educational circles which never ceased.<sup>5</sup> We have some details about eight *Zāwiyahs* formed in this mosque, out of which I mention the following three:

*Zāwiyat al-Imām al-Shāfi'ī*: in which he himself sat to teach and thus it was called after him. Until the time of al-Maqrizī, only the best scholars and most famous theologians were to teach in it.

*Al-Zāwiya al-Majdiyyah*: to which *Qādī al-Qudāh Wajīh al-Dīn* 'Abd al-Wahhāb al-Bahnasī was appointed to teach. Up to al-Maqrizī's time the occupation of this post was looked upon as an ideal achievement.

*Al-Zāwiya al-Sāhibiyyah*: to which Shāfi'ī and Mālikī teachers were appointed.<sup>6</sup>

Literary circles were often held, too, in this mosque. It is recorded that al-Tabarī formed a circle in 253 A.H. in which he read from the poetry of al-Tirimmāh as a response to a request made by Abū al-Hasan b. al-Sarrāj.<sup>7</sup>

Mosques were educational centres for the various kinds of knowledge known to the Arabs at that time. Besides the exam-

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(1) Ibn Jubair : *al-Rihla*, p. 266.

(2) Yâqût : *Mu'jam al-Udabâ'*, I, p. 255.

(3) See al-Maqrizī : *al-Khitat* : II, pp. 246, 256.

(4) *Ibid.*, p. 253.

(5) Al-Maqrizī : *al-Khitat*, II, 26.

(6) *Ibid.*, pp. 255—256.

(7) Yâqût : *Irshād* VI : 432.



( Fig. 1 )  
View of the Umayyad Mosque in Damascus



( Fig. 2 )

View of the Umayyad Mosque in Damascus

ples mentioned above, I refer briefly to the circle held by "Abd Allâh b. "Abbâs in al Ka"ba on Thursdays, the subject of which was exegesis, <sup>1</sup> the circle of Rabî"at al-Ra'y in the mosque of al-Medîna, in which Mâlik, al Hasan and the upper class in Medina learnt mostly jurisprudence <sup>2</sup> and that of al-Hasan al-Basrî in al-Basrah for the study of theology .<sup>3</sup> In the latter's circle a schism occurred and Wasil b. "Aîâ", the leader of the new group formed a circle in which the scholastic theology was particularly developed. <sup>4</sup>

Arabic philological studies were conducted, too, in the mosque. We read about Abû "Umar al-Zâhid, who taught syntax in al Mansûr's mosque, <sup>5</sup> and about Nafrawayh, who taught the same subject in Masjid al-Anbâriyyîn. <sup>6</sup> In Granada we hear that a grammarian used to gather many pupils round him in the mosque. <sup>7</sup>

Literary studies were pursued also in mosques. In the mosque of al Kûfâ a literary circle was usually held by al-Kumait b. Zaid and Hammâd al-Râwiyah in which these two poets studied and debated literary questions. <sup>8</sup> Sa"îd b. al-Musayyab discussed Arabic poetry in the mosque of al-Medîna <sup>9</sup> and Muslim b. al-Walîd often held a circle in the mosque of al-Basra to read his poetry. <sup>10</sup>

Exegesis, Traditions, jurisprudence, and astronomy were studied in the mosque of Ibn Tûlûn. <sup>11</sup>

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(1) See al-Bukhârî : *Bab al-'ilm* I, p. 29, and al-Suyûtî : *al-Itqân fî 'Ulûm al-Qur'ân* II, 224--225.

(2) Ibn Khallikan, I, pp. 257--258.

(3) *Ibid*, II, p. 252.

(4) *Ibid*.

(5) Ibn al-Nadîm, *al-Fihrist*, p. 113

(6) *Ibid*., p. 121.

(7) Al-Maqqari, II, 254.

(8) *Al-Aghânî*, XV, pp. 113--114.

(9) Al-Tabarî, II, p. 1266.

(10) Al-Marzabânî : *al-Muwâshshah*, pp. 289 - 290.

(11) Al-Suyûtî : *Hasn al-Muhadarah*, II : 137



Even medicine was studied in the mosque. "Abd al-Larîf al-Baghdâdî reports that «he used to teach in al-Azhar during the early and the late hours of the day and», he adds, «in the middle of the day a medical scholar used to come to teach medicine». <sup>1</sup>

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(1 Ibn Abî Usaibi 'ah II, p. 207

## 2. SCHOOLS

### INTRODUCTION

Before speaking about schools there are some important points which ought to be discussed:

1. Why did education move from mosques to schools?

Since the rise of Islam the number of students had gradually been increasing, and consequently the number of circles increased too. It is believed that the numerous circles and the necessary disturbance caused by study, prevented worship from being conducted properly. Thus we find that a mosque like al-Azhar was, with the exception of the Friday prayers, almost abandoned to the promotion of learning. But this was not a satisfactory solution of the problem as mosques were mainly built for worship, and worship should not be curtailed in any way. Moreover, studies developed and new subjects such as discussions and debates came into being. These subjects could not be adequately conducted in the mosque where everyone should be reverent and quiet. Under these circumstances the removal from the mosque to the *Madrasah* was natural. I quote here Von Kramer's view on this point, which is worth consideration.

He says: «The progress and diffusion of knowledge created a body of men who found it difficult to make a decent living through their abstract learning. It was to promote further study and to provide sufficient stipends for such men that the *Madrasahs* were really established.»<sup>1</sup>

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(1) Khuda Bukhsh : *Islamic civilization*, p. 258.

## 2. What was the difference between mosques and schools?

The distinction was, to some extent, obscure; as we hear of a mosque in which a teacher was appointed,<sup>1</sup> and of a school where a caller for prayer was engaged.<sup>2</sup> But nevertheless there are special features by which schools can be distinguished. The *Iwân* — an ancient equivalent of the modern lecture-room — was the most conspicuous feature peculiar to schools. Next come the residential quarters which appeared in most of the school buildings. Ibn al-'Ajamî reports that when Nûr al-Dîn captured Aleppo and transformed the mosque of *al-Sarrâjîn* into a school, an *Iwân* and lodgings were created in it.<sup>3</sup> Moreover the number of the regular students in a school was often limited, and school endowments always mention grants to students.

## 3. Why were schools mostly devoted to religious studies?

Indeed the activity of Muslims was absorbed, to a great extent, in promoting religious studies in most of these schools instead of continuing to encourage various branches of secular learning. Consequently the greater number of these schools was connected with Shâfi'i, Hanafî, Mâlikî or Hanbalî's name and jurisprudence.

The reason for that was the need of the time. Irâq, Syria and Egypt were under the domination of the Buwayhids and the Fatimids. These two dynasties, being of the Shî'a sect, helped the advancement of Shî'ism by propaganda and, in some cases, by imposing their religious views upon their subjects.<sup>4</sup> With the fall of these two dynasties the Sunni Saljûk and Ayyûbid dynasties arose and established schools as a counteraction to help people to learn the true faith. So it is natural that in most of these schools the chief attention was given to religious studies.

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(1) Abû Shâmah : *al-Rawdatayn* I, p. 189.

(2) Al-Maqrîzî : *al-Khitat* II, pp. 374, 400.

(3) *Kunûz al-Dhahab fî Tarîkh Halab* 59 A. MS Rome, *Pargiane Arabia* No. 235.

(4) See al-Dhahabî : *Duwal al-Islâm* I, p. 171.

With the victory of Sunnî doctrines, however, secular studies regained some of their former importance. Al-Mustansir (d. 640 A.H.), for example, ordered the appointment of a skilful medical doctor in his school (al-Mustansiriyyah) to lecture on medicine to ten students. He ordered, too, that the doctor and his students should be granted the same stipends as those granted to jurists and their students. <sup>1</sup>

### **The Establishment of Schools in the Islamic World**

The conquest of Baghdad by the Saljûks (25th Muharram 447 A.H.) was the turning-point in the struggle against Shi'ism there. The Shi'a doctrines, which had been fostered by the Buwayhids, no longer flourished in Baghdâd. The method followed by the Saljûks in replacing the Shi'a heresy by the Sunnî system of thought was a counter-propaganda. The people must learn the true religion, and, therefore, colleges must be established everywhere. The idea was put into effect, soon after the rise of the dynasty, by Nizâm al-Mulk (d. 485 A.H.) the minister of Alep Arslân and Malikshâh. Nizâm al-Mulk founded the splendid colleges called after him in Baghdad, Nishâbûr and many other cities.

The foundation of schools for the same purpose has never stopped since then, but of all the followers of Nizâm al-Mulk in this cause none is more conspicuous than Nûr al-Dîn who was the first founder of schools in Damascus.<sup>2</sup> Nûr al-Dîn ascended the throne in 541 A.H. and after that he began to establish colleges in the chief cities of his kingdom until his death in 569 A.H.

Under the Ayyûbids a system of schools was introduced into Egypt, and, in the whole kingdom once subjected to Nûr al-Dîn, a great number of schools was built. Kings, princes

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(1) Ma'rûf : *al-Madrasah al-Mustansiriyyah*, p. 43.

(2) Article in *al-Jâmi'ah al-Islâmiyyah* periodical, no. 224, p. 40, by Shaikh al-Tabbâkh.



princesses, merchants and even servants showed an interest in founding schools and patronising education.<sup>1</sup>

The list of the important schools given below will follow the plan explained above:

### **Schools Founded by Nizâm al-Mulk**

Abû Shâmah writes, «The schools founded by Nizâm al-Mulk are very famous all over the world. No single village lacks one of these schools. Even Ibn 'Umar's island, which is situated in a remote corner of the world and is not densely populated, has a big school now named after a certain Radî al-Dîn». <sup>2</sup>

"Imâd al-Dîn al-Isfahânî says: «Whenever he finds a learned man in any town, Nizâm al-Mulk immediately founds a school for him to teach in, endows it and supplies it with a collection of books». <sup>3</sup>

Many similar statements are mentioned in various sources, but al-Subkî names the following cities in each of which Nizâm al-Mulk had founded a well organised and endowed college.

Baghdâd — Balkh — Nîshâbûr — Harât — Isbahân — al-Basrah — Merw — Amul — al-Mawsil.

Al-Subkî, however, ends his statement by saying «It is said that Nizâm al-Mulk had a school built in each town of al-Îraq and Khurâsân». <sup>4</sup>

(1) The movement of founding schools under the Ayyûbids was not interrupted by the fall of the dynasty. The Mamluks followed in the steps of their masters with great enthusiasm in both Egypt and Syria. It will be sufficient, therefore, to mention the Ayyûbid schools referring to al-Maqrîzî, al-Suyûtî (*Hasn al-Muhadarah*), Ibn Doqmaq, al-Nu'imî and Mujîr al-Dîn as sources in which information about the Mamlûks' schools can be found.

(2) *Al-Rawdatain* I, p. 25.

(3) *Tarîkh Al-Saljûk*, p. 57.

(4) *Tabaqat al-Shafi'îyyah al-Kubrâ* III, p. 137

## Schools founded by Nûr al-Dîn

Most of the sources give us general statements only about the numerous schools founded by Nûr al-Dîn in the various towns of Syria. <sup>1</sup> Nevertheless, we have accurate information from which we can give a clear picture of the important schools established by Nûr al-Dîn as follows:

### *In Damascus:*

<i>School</i>	<i>Reference</i>
Dâr al- <i>Hadîth</i> al-Nûriyyâh	al-Nu`îmî 1:99
al-Salâhiyyah	» 1:331
al-`Imâdiyyah	» 1:407
al-Kilâsah	» 1:447
al-Nûriyyah al-Kubrâ	» 1:606

Of this school a detailed study will  
be given after the list of schools.

al-Nûriyyah al-Sughrâ	al-Nu`îmî 1:648
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### *In Aleppo:*

al-Halwiyyah	<i>I`lâm al-Nubalâ'</i> II:71
	<i>al-Durr al-Muntakhab</i> p. 115
al-`Asrûniyyah	<i>I`lâm...</i> II:75, <i>al-Durr...</i> 110
al-Nûriyyah	» II:76 » 111
al-Shu`aibiyyah	» II:76

### *In other cities:*

Two schools in each of <i>Hamâh</i> and <i>Hums</i>	See <i>Mufarrij al-Kurub</i> p. 165 MS. Cambridge University L1.16
One school in Ba`labakk	al-Nu`îmî 1:401

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(1) See, for example, *al-Rawdatain* I, p. 14

## Schools established under the Ayyubids

### A. By Sultans :

#### In Egypt:

School	Founder	References
al - Nāsiriyyah ad-joining the "Atîq Mosque	Saladin	al - Khitât II: 363, Ibn Duqmâq IV: 9
al - Qamhiyyah	"	al - Khitât II: 364, Ibn Duqmâq IV: 9
al - Suyûfiyyah	"	al - Khitât II: 365
al - Nāsiriyyah in al-Qarâfah	"	al - Khitât II: 400, Husn al-Muhâdath II : 157
al - "Adil	al - "Adil	al - Khitât II: 365
al - Kâmilîyyah	al - Kâmil	al - Khitât II: 375, Husn al-Muhâdath II : 159
al - Sâlihiyyah	Najm al - Dîn Ayyûb	al - Khitât II: 374, Husn al-Muhâdath II : 159

#### In Jerusalem :

al - Salâhiyyah	Saladin	al - Uns al - Jalîl II : 393
al - Afdaliyyah	al - Afdal b. Saladin	" " " " II : 397
al - Nahwiyyah	al - Mu"azzam "Isâ	" " " " II : 386

#### In Damascus :

al - Salâhiyyah	Saladin	al - Nu"imî II : 10
al - "Azîziyyah	al - "Azîz b. Saladin	" " " " I : 382
al - Zâhiriyyah al - Barrâniyyah	al - Zâhir b. "	" " " " I : 340
al - "Adiliyyah al - Kubrâ	al - Malik al - "Adil	" " " " I : 359
al - Mu"azzamiyyah	al - Mu"azzam "Isâ	" " " " I : 579, Ibn Tûlûn 143
Dâr al - Hadîth al - Ashrafiyyah al - Barrâniyyah	Mûsâ b. al - "Adil	al - Nu"imî I : 47
al - "Azîziyyah	al - "Azîz b. al - "Adil	al - Nu"imî I : 549

B. By people of high rank ( Princes, Princesses, Ministers and Amîrs ) Amîr: is the title of a man of marked ability who attended on and advised the Sultan on military and other matters.

#### In Egypt :

School	Founder	Position	References
al - Qutbiyyah	Qutb al-Dîn Khusraw	Amîr	<i>al - Khitat</i> II : 365
Manâzil al - "Izz	Taqî al - Dîn "Umar	Prince	" " " II : 364 Ibn Duqmâq IV : 93

Two more schools were established in al - Fayyûm by the same founder. See *al-Khitat* II : 364.

al - Fâdiliyyah	al - Qâdî al - Fâdil	Minister	<i>al - Khitat</i> II : 366
al - Azkashiyya	Sayf al - Dîn Ayâzkûj	Amir	" " II : 367 Ibn Duqmâq IV:94-95
al - Sayfiyyah	Sayf al-Dîn b. Ayyûb	Prince	<i>al - Khitat</i> II : 368
al - "Ashûriyyah	"Ashûra' bint Sârûh	an Amir's wife	" " II : 368
al - Qutbiyyah	"Ismat al - Dîn bint	Princess	
	al - "Adil		" " II : 391
al - Sharîfiyyah	al - Sharîf Fakhr al - Dîn	Amîr	" " II : 374
al - Sâhibiyyah	"Abd Allâh b. "Alî	Minister	" " II : 371
al - Fakhriyyah	Fakhr al - Dîn al - Bârûmî	Ustâdâr of al - Kâmil	" " II : 367
al - Sayramiyyah	Jamâl al Dîn b. Sayram	Amîr	" " II : 378
al - Fâ'iziyyah	Sharaf al - Dîn Hibat Allah	Minister	" " II : 365 Ibn Duqmâq : IV 92

#### In Jerusalem :

al - Maymûniyyah	Maymûn b. "Abd Allah	Amîr	<i>al - Uns al - Jalil</i> II : 399
al - Badriyyah	Badr al - Dîn b. Abî al - Qâsim	Amîr	<i>al - Uns al - Jalil</i> II: 398

#### In Damascus :

al - Sâhibiyyah	Rabî"ah bint Najm al-Dîn	Princess	<i>al - Nu"îmî</i> II : 79
Farrukhshâbiyyah	Farrukhshâh b. Shâhinshâh	Prince	" " I : 561



### In Damascus :

School	Founder	Position	References
al - 'Adhrāwiyyah	'Adhrā' bint Nūr al-Dawlah	Princess	al - Nu'imī I : 373
al - Taqwiyyah	Taqī al - Dīn b. Shāhīnshāh	Prince	«    «    I : 216
al-Shāmiyyah al-Bar-rāniyyah	Sittal - Shām b. Najm al - Dīn	Princess	«    «    I : 277
al - Shāmiyyah al-Juwwāniyyah	Sittal - Shām b. Najm al - Dīn	«    «	«    «    I : 301
al - Mārdāniyyah	Khātūn 'Azizah	the wife of al-Mu-'azzam	«    «    I : 592
al - Bahnasiyyah	Majd al - Dīn al-Bah-nasī	Minister	«    «    I : 215 al - Qalā'id al - Ja-hariyyah p. 121
al - Atābikiyyah	Khātūn bint 'Izz al-Dīn	the wife of al-Ashraf	al - Nu'imī I : 129 al - Qalā'id al - Ja-hariyyah : 102
al - 'Izziyyah al-Bar-rāniyyah	'Izz al - Dīn al - A'zamī	the deputy of the king in Sarkhad	al - Nu'imī I : 550
al - 'Izziyyah al-Juw-wāniyyah	'Izz al - Dīn al - A'zamī	the deputy of the king in Sarkhad	«    «    I : 555
al - 'Izziyyah al-Ha-nafiyyah	'Izz al - Dīn al - A'zamī	the deputy of the king in Sarkhad	«    «    I : 557

### C. By Commoners :

### In Egypt :

Ibn al - Arsūfi	'Abd Allāh b. al-Arsūfi	Merchant	al - Khitat II : 364
al - Masrūriyyah	Masrūr al - Safadi	Servant	«    «    II : 378
al - Ghaznawiyyah	Husām al - Dīn Qāy-māz	Freedman	«    «    II : 390
Ibn Kashīq	Pilgrims from al-Takrūr	«    «	«    «    II : 361

**In Damascus :**

School	Founder	Position	References
al - "Asrûniyyah	Sharaf al - Dîn b. "Asrûn	Qâdî al - Qudâh	al - Nu"îmî I : 398
al - Falakiyyah	Falak al - Dîn Sulai-man	Half brother of al - "Adil	" " I : 431
al - Iqbâliyyah	Jamâl al - Dîn Iqbâl	Freedman	" " I : 158
al - Masrûriyyah	Shibl al - Dîn Kâfûr	Servant	" " I : 455
al - "Umariyyah	Abû "Umar al - Maq-disi	Qâdî al - Qudâh	" " II : 100
Dâr al - Hadîth al - "Urwiyyah	Sharaf al - Dîn b. "Urwah	Theologian	" " I : 82
al - Ruwâhiyyah	Zakî al - Dîn b. Ru-wâhah	Merchant	" " I : 265
al - Sârimiyyah	Sârim al - Dîn b. Az-bak	Freedman	" " I : 326
al - Shibliyyah al - Barrâniyyah	Shibl al Dîn Kâfûr	Servant	" " I : 530

Shibl al-Dîn died in 623, but in accordance with his will the school was built posthumously ( in 626 ).

al - Rukniyyah	Rukn al - Dîn Man-kurs	Freedman	al - Nu"îmî I : 253
al - Dawla"iyyah	Jamâl al - Dîn al - Dawla"î	Theologian	" " I : 242
al - Dimâghiyyah	The wife of Shuja"al-Dîn b. al - Dimâgh	"	" " I : 236

**MEDICAL SCHOOLS**

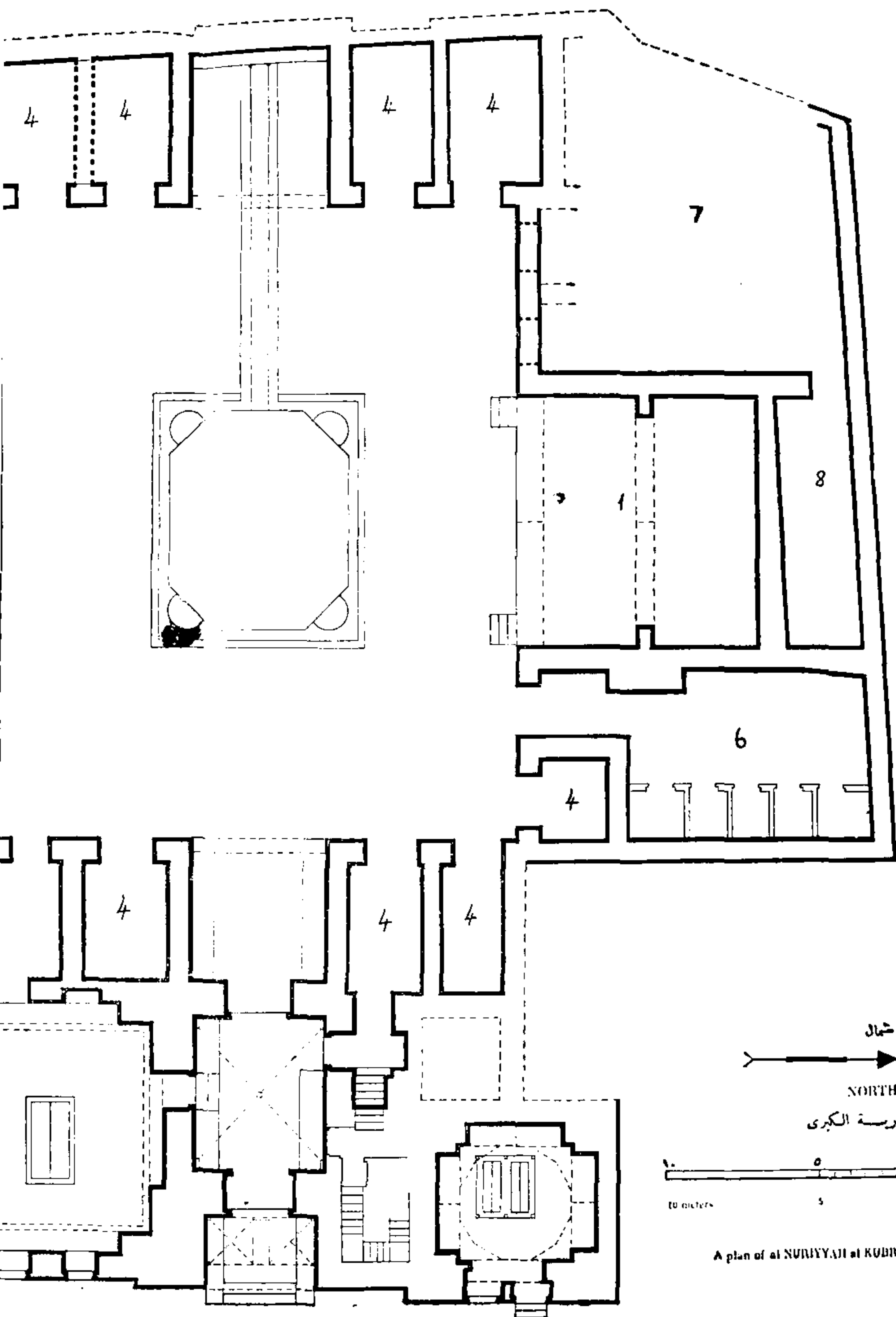
al - Dikhwâriyyah	Muhadhdhab al - Dîn Dikhwâr	Medical doctor	al - Nu"îmî II : 127
al - Dunaysariyyah	"Imad al - Dîn al-Du-naysarî	" " "	" " II : 133

- Note : I One may be surprised at the small number of medical schools, but one should remember that medical study was conducted mostly in hospitals. Ibn Abi Usaibi'ah, for example, states that the medical doctor Abû al-Majd b. 'Abd al-Hakam (6th century) regularly sat in the *Iwân* of Nûr al-Dîn's hospital to teach a great number of medical students. (*'Uyûn al-Anbâ'* II : 155.) In al-Mansûrî's hospital in Egypt, too, the chief doctor had a certain place in which he used to sit and give medical lectures (*al-Khitat* II : 406). (For the numerous hospitals of the Islamic World, see Ibn al-'Ibrî, Ibn Jubair and *al-Khitat*)
- II As a type of the majority of schools in medieval Islam, al-Nûriyyah al-Kubrâ in Damascus, which I visited in September 1950 and studied on the spot, will be chosen for detailed study. The following is a plan of it.









شمال  
NORTH.

محطة التوريسة الكبرى

0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 meters

A plan of al-SURYYAH at KUDRA

### **Al-Nūriyyah al-Kubrā**

In the sixth century this institute was described by Ibn Jubair as «one of the best colleges in the world...». <sup>1</sup> The institute still gives the impression that it was so in its prime. It looks magnificent and contains almost everything needed for a residential high school.

According to Abū Shāmah <sup>2</sup> (665 A.H.) and Ibn Shaddād <sup>3</sup> (684 A.H.) this school was established by Nūr al-Dīn in 563 A.H. But al-Nu'īmī (927 A.H.) who takes most of his materials from Ibn Shaddād, differs here from him and attributes its foundation to Ismā'il b. Nūr al-Dīn. <sup>4</sup> Al-Nu'īmī gives no reason or proof for his assertion. He refers only to the fact that the body of Nūr al-Dīn was not at first buried in the school but was transferred to it in the time of Ismā'il. Nevertheless tomb chambers in schools were mostly the last thing to be prepared and thus the tomb chamber of al-Nūriyyah was not finally ready at the death of the founder. Moreover the endowment tablet fixed over the main entrance mentions Nūr al-Dīn as the founder and is dated 567 A.H., i.e. two years before Nūr al-Dīn's death.

The school is situated in Khatt al-Khawwāsīn which is now called «al-Khayyārīn», and it is about half a mile south west of the Umayyad mosque.

The area upon which the school was founded measures about 1500 square metres, of which about 150 square metres have been encroached upon by the neighbours to the west. Of the remaining area the court, in the middle, measures 340:30 square metres and in its centre the tank (7.8 by 6.5 m) is situated. A small channel was constructed to connect the

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(1) *Al-Rihlah*, p. 284.

(2) *Al-Rawdalain* I : 229.

(3) *Al-A'lāq al-Khatirah* p. 44, MS in the private possession of Dr Sāmī al-Dahhān Damascus.

(4) *Al-Dāris*, vol. I, p. 607.

tank with Qanawât River which flowed to the west of the school. The channel is still existing and water now runs through it from taps and from a fountain in the back wall. In the court a number of trees have been planted. (See fig. 3).

The school has a monumental entrance: an arch with an outer door, a broad passage leading to the court with a second door halfway along. Over the lintel of the outer door the endowment tablet is fixed. (See fig. 4).

To the right of the entrance is the tomb chamber of Shaikh Muḥammad Daqīq al-'Id (702/1303); the door of which opens directly on to the street. Left of the entrance is the tomb chamber of Nūr al-Dīn the founder of the school. The chamber has a splendid dome resembling that of the Nūrī hospital, a type of which there are no other examples in Damascus. (See fig. 5).

On the right of the entrance hall a staircase leads up to the teacher's private lodge which was occupied when I visited the school in September 1950 by its teacher Shaikh Salih al-'Aqqād. Another flight of the same staircase goes round outside the minaret, the height of which is now 6 m. and about which we have no information. This staircase continues to the top of the school.

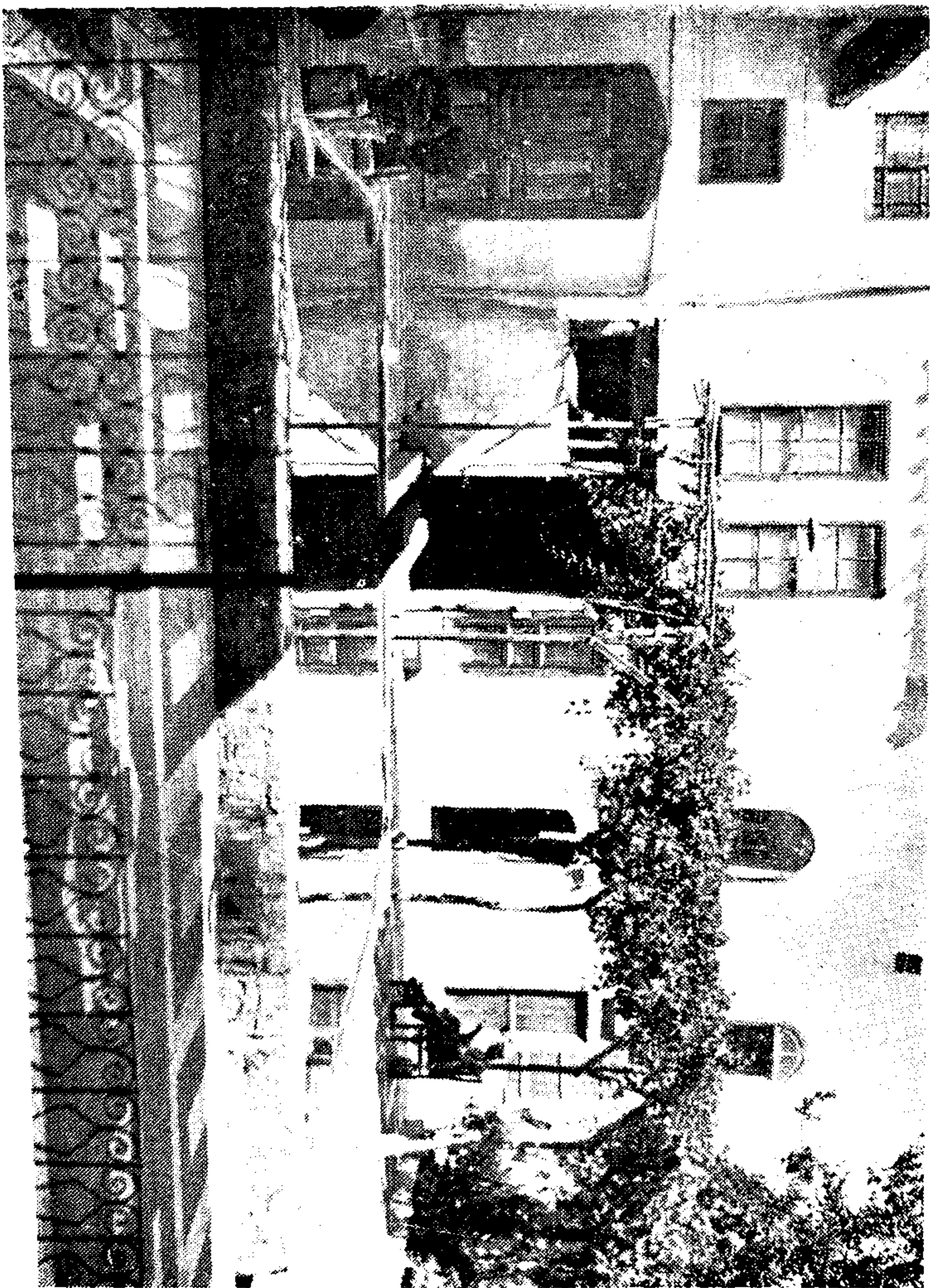
Apart from this the description will be given according to the numbers written on the plan:

1. The *Iwân*: The *Iwân* is the most important place in a medieval Muslim school. It is the ancient equivalent of the modern lecture room and so the *ḥalqah* was held in it.<sup>1</sup> Al-Nûriyyah's *Iwân* is 8.25 m. long, 7.8 wide and 9.7 high. It has an arch at half the width which is a recent addition. The floor level of the *Iwân* is one metre higher than that of the school, and thus it has two small flights of steps, one at each end.

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(1) At later times schools had, frequently, a number of *Iwâns* according to the number of jurisprudential sects taught in it.

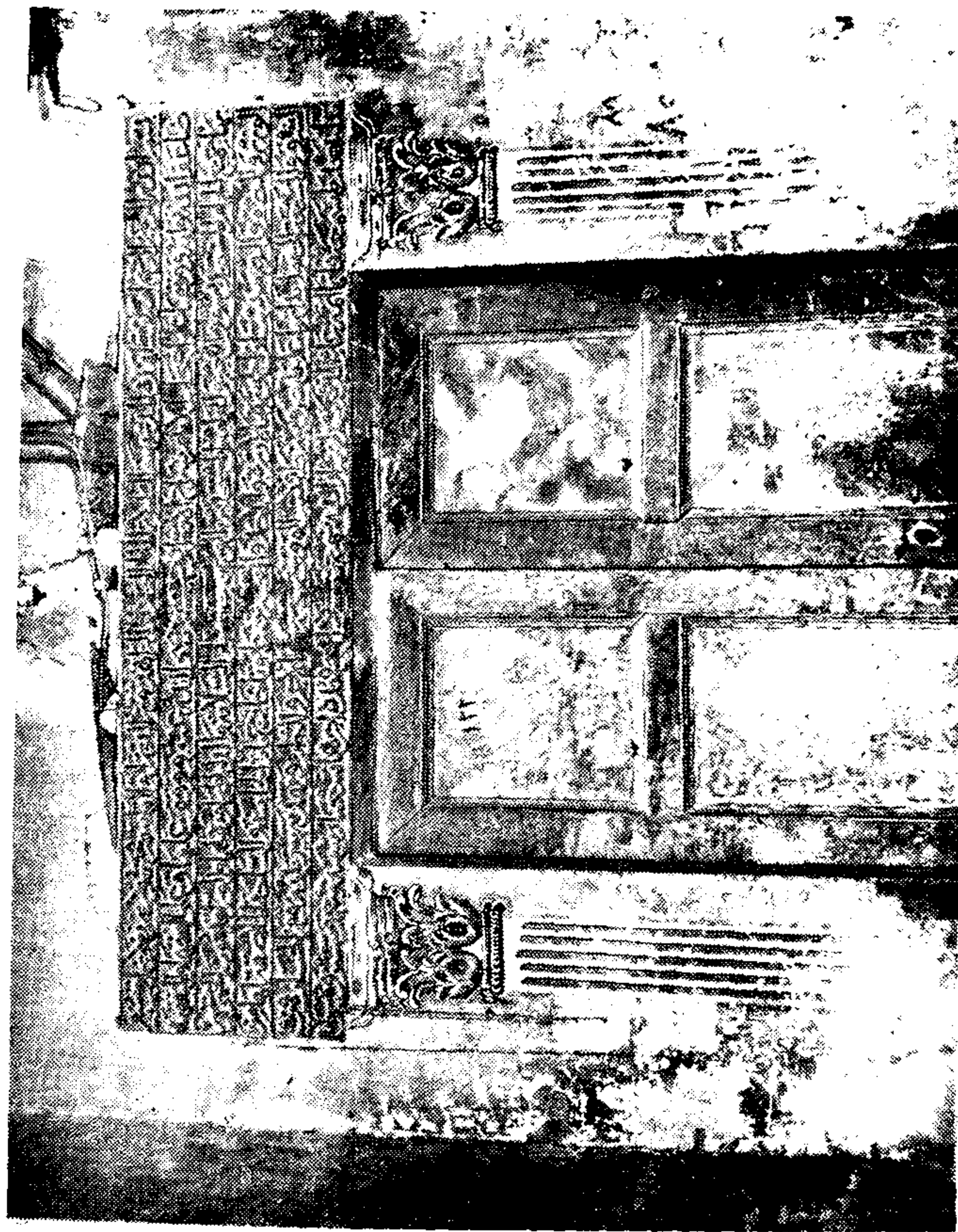




( Fig. 3 )

The Court of al - Nuriyyah with the tank, the channel and the trees





( Fig. 4 )

The outer door of al - Nuriyyah school with the endowment tablet above

(See fig. 6).

2. The mosque: Next to the *Iwân* the mosque takes the most significant place in a medieval Muslim school. The mosque in a school was not confined to its students but it was open for other worshippers. Thus it is natural that it occupies a place remote from the *Iwân* in order that the lecture should not disturb the prayers. The mosque has an old *mīhrāb* and it opens on to the court by a group of three arches originally without doors, the middle one being the largest.

3. The teacher's rooms for rest: The eastern side of the mosque communicates with two small rooms by a pair of doors. The two rooms, which were provided for the repose of the teacher, are still used for the original purpose.

4. Eight lodges for the students; each lodge now has two rooms one above the other with internal stairs. Most of these lodges are still occupied by students who join different institutes in Damascus.

5. The caretaker's lodging: The lodge of the servant comprises the necessary rooms and domestic offices as appears in the plan. It was occupied at the time of my visit by the Caretaker, *Hâjj Maḥmūd Jawhar*.

6. The latrines of the building which are still used for the same purpose.

7. This area was, it is believed, occupied by the kitchen and the dining hall and according to the aged *Hâjj Maḥmūd Jawhar* the area was appropriated by the neighbours about fifty years ago.

8. The store of food materials which was appropriated at about the same date.

9. The general store of the building. A generation ago, according to *Hâjj Maḥmūd Jawhar*, a quarrel took place between its neighbours and the school's teacher about possessing this place, and when the teacher failed to keep it, he left the pair of doors in the western side of the mosque in the hope that coming generations would succeed in restoring the place.



Some teachers of the school:

The school was confined to *Hanafi* jurisprudence and thus a selected number of *Hanafi* professors were chosen to teach in it. Of these we mention:

Bahâ' al-Dîn b. al-'Aqqâdah (d. 596 A.H.)

Burhân al-Dîn Mas'ûd (d. 599 A.H.)

Al-sharaf Dâwûd until 623 (d. 639 A.H.)

Jamâl al-Dîn al-*Husri* (d. 636 A.H.)

Sadr al-Dîn Ibrâhîm on behalf of al-*Husri*'s sons until the elder of these was qualified enough and then he occupied the chair until his death (655 A.H.)

Nizâm al-Dîn al-*Husri* the younger son of Jamâl al-Dîn.

Sadr al-Dîn al-Basrawî (d. 727 A.H.)

'Imâd al-Dîn b. al-Tarasûsî (d. 748 A.H.)<sup>1</sup>

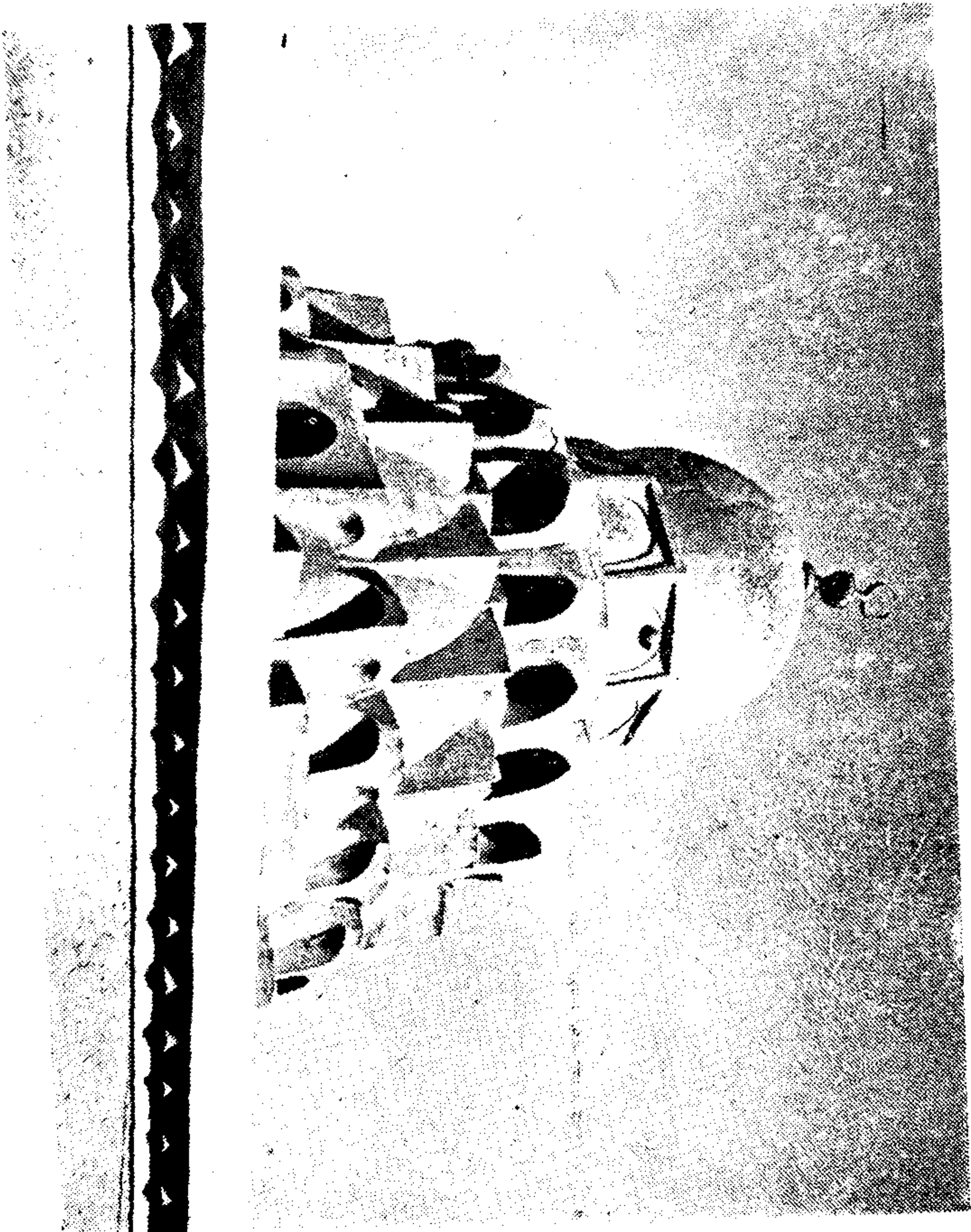
The endowments of the school:

The endowments of the school are clearly visible from the tablet above the front door as appears in the photograph already given (Fig. 4). The translation of the text reads:

(In the name of God the Compassionate and the Merciful. This blessed school was established by the order of the ascetic just king Nûr al-Dîn Abû al-Qâsim Mahmûd b. Zankî b. Aq Sinqar, God may redouble his reward. He confines it to the followers of the Imâm Abû *Hanifah*, the light of the nation, may God be well-pleased with him. Upon the school, its jurists and students He (the founder) bequeathes the whole new bath in the wheat market, the two new baths in al-Warrâqah outside al-Salâmah Gate, the neighbouring house to these two baths, al-Warrâqah in 'Uwaynat al-*Himâ*, al-Wazîr's garden, the three quarters of al-Jawrah's garden in al-Arzah, the eleven shops outside of the Jâbiyah gate, the adjacent space to these shops from the east and the nine farms in Dâryâ according to the text and conditions mentioned in the documents of the

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(1) Ibn Shaddâd : *al-A'laq al-Khatirah* p. p. 44, 45, MS. in the private possession of Dr. Sâmi al-Dahhân, Damascus-al-Nu'mî : *al-Dûris*, I, p. p. 618—619.



( Fig. 5 )

The dome of Nūr al - Dīn's tomb chamber





( Fig. 6 )

The *Iwān* of al - Nūriyyah school

endowment. (The founder does so) wishing to find the reward and recompense awaiting him on the Day of Judgment. «Whoever then alters it after he has heard it, the sin of it then is only upon those who alter it; surely Allah is hearing and knowing.» <sup>1</sup> This is to take place not later than Sha'bbân of 567 A.H.).

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(1) *Sûrah II* verse 180.

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## A. Libraries and Education

It may be asked why we propose to include libraries in our work on education.

In answer to this I would recall the fact that most medieval Islamic libraries were educational institutions besides performing the function of modern libraries. Moreover the first Islamic academy (Bait al-*Hikmah*) was founded in conjunction with a collection of books, so that historians did not agree whether to consider it a library or a school. This establishment became a model for later ones initiated both by the state and individuals. Leaving the state institutions to be dealt with later on, I give here a few examples of libraries in which studies took place:

In the grand palace of 'Alī b. Yahya al-Munajjim (275 A.H.), there was a great library called *Khizānat al-Hikmah*, to which many people travelled from different places to study. Accommodation was available for students who wanted to live in the library wing, and food was also offered to them. One of its famous students was Abū Ma'shar al-Munajjim who had seen it on his way from Khurāsān to the Holy Places. When he entered the library he marvelled at its magnitude so that he abandoned the pilgrimage and stayed there to learn astrology which he succeeded in mastering.<sup>1</sup>

Ja'far b. Muḥammad b. Ḥamdān (d. 323 A.H.) of al-Mawsil established an educational institution in his town together with a rich library. Admission was granted to everyone, and poor students were financially supported. Ja'far himself, used to sit to teach in it and to read from his own works.<sup>2</sup>

Speaking about Rāma-Hurmuz, al-Maqdisī indicated that in it there was a library similar to that in al-Basrah. Both were founded by Abū 'Alī b. Sawwār who also supplied their

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(1) Yâqût : *Mu'jam al-Udabâ'*, V, p. 467.

(2) *Ibid.* II, p. 420.

students regularly with rations. The library of al-Basrah was bigger and better housed. Thus students were attracted to it to take advantage of its marvellous collection and to attend the lessons given there by a Shaikh in scholastic theology according to the *Mu'tazila* sect.<sup>1</sup>

And lastly Abû al-"Alâ' al-Ma'arrî very often sat in Khi-zânat Sâbûr for study and the debates frequently held there in which Abû al-"Alâ' was a leading figure.<sup>2</sup>

Thus libraries could have been included in the first chapter (Places for Educational Purposes), but as there is special significance connected with libraries, I preferred to deal with them in a separate chapter.

## B. The Moral Value of Books,

Books are always spoken of by the Arabs with great respect and love. They consider them faithful companions and good guides so that if one hears an Arab speaking about books, one can hardly realize that he is not talking about an affectionate brother or friend. A certain Caliph once sent for a learned man to come to have an evening chat with him. The learned man who was occupied in consulting some references replied: «I have a group of helpful Comrades with whom I am chatting now. Later I shall come.» Hearing this answer, the Caliph was so annoyed that he sent for him to be brought at once. The learned man, in reply to the Caliph's question as to who these comrades were, explained that this group was such as gives knowledge, guidance and glory, you can consider them dead, and you can consider them alive and active.<sup>3</sup>

(1) Al-Maqdisî : *Ahsan al-Ta'qisim fî Ma'rifat al-Aqâlim*, p. 413

(2) See Margolioth's introduction to *Rasâ'il Abi al-"Alâ'*.

(3) Ibn al-Taqtaqî : *al-Fakhri*, p. 10, and the Arabic verse cited by the learned man was :

لنا جلساء لا نعمل حديثهم ألباء مأمونون غيبا ومشهدا  
إذا ما خلونا كان خير حديثهم معينا على تقي الهوم مؤيدا



Indeed this respect and love for books must be attributed to al-Jâhiz's works and maxims. Before him people took delight in poetry rather than prose and paid more attention to poetical works than to other books. His works and sayings were the first to incline men to love this kind of literature. It is he who says speaking of the book:

«Beyond all comparison it is cheap and easy to procure, it contains the marvels of history and science, the fruit of sound minds and wise experience and reports of previous generations and distant lands. Who can have such another guest that may either make a short sojourn or stay with you as your own shadow or even as a very limb of your body.<sup>1</sup> The book is silent so long as you need silence, eloquent whenever you want discourse. He never interrupts you if you are engaged, but if you feel lonely he will be a good companion. ... He is a friend who never deceives or flatters you and he is a comrade who does not grow tired of you». <sup>2</sup>

Muhammad b. 'Abd al-Malik al-Zayyât ceased, for a time, to appear in public in consequence of a slight sickness. The same illustrious al-Jâhiz thought of a present to take to Ibn al-Zayyât when visiting him. Nothing seemed suitable for the occasion except the Book of Sîbawaih written by al-Kisâ'i and revised by al-Farrâ'. On receiving it Ibn al-Zayyât declared that it was an unequalled choice and that he would not esteem anything as much as that gift.<sup>3</sup> «Books, however, were not as kind to al-Jâhiz as he was to them.» says 'Abd al-Salâm Hâ-

يفيدوننا من عندهم علم من مضى وعقلا وتأديباً ورأياً مسدداً  
فلا ريبة تخشى ولا سوء عشرة ولا تنقي منهم لساناً ولا يسداً  
فان قلت أمواتاً فقلت بكاذب وان قلت أحياء فقلت مفقداً

See also *Muhâdarât al-Abrâr*, 3 B MS.

- (1) *Muhâdarât al-Abrâr* attributed to Muhyi al-Dîn b. al-'Arabî, 3 B MS, Istanbul.
- (2) al-Jâhiz : *al-Hayawân*, I, pp. 50-51.
- (3) Yâqût : *Mu'jam al-Udabâ'*, VI, pp. 85-86.

rûn. <sup>1</sup> While he did his best to win respect for them, spending much wealth to collect them, they were the cause of his death. He used to heap up round him the books he needed for his study, and one day a pile of books fell upon him, and, as a result of his advanced age and poor health, the books killed him. <sup>2</sup>

A certain learned man is reported to have said: « A book is the only orchard, I have ever seen, which can be put in one's sleeve and the only park which accompanies a man as he goes. The book is the tongue of the dead and the voice of the living. He is an evening visitor who never sleeps until you sleep and never utters a word except what pleases you, never reveals a secret or abuses a deposit. He is the most faithful neighbour, just friend, obedient companion, submissive professor, expert and useful comrade with no <sup>3</sup> desire to argue or to weary of his owner». <sup>3</sup>

The feeble Caliph al-Muktafi (d. 295 A.H.) asked his minister to get him some books with which to pass the time. The minister, in turn, ordered some of his governors to do so on condition that they showed him the books before submitting them to the Caliph. The collection obtained consisted of historical and other serious works so that the minister rebuked those who had collected them indicating that such were professors who would arouse the Caliph and teach him his rights and duties while he (the minister) wished to keep him ignorant of such useful knowledge... <sup>4</sup>

Al-Mutanabbî, the famous Arab poet, in this connection says: «The most honourable seat in this world is in the saddle of a horse, and the best companion will always be a book». <sup>5</sup>

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(1) The introduction of *Kitâb al-Hayawân*, I, p. 5.

(2) Abû al-Fidâ, II, p. 47.

(3) *Al-Musâyarât* attributed to Muhyi al-Din b. al-'Arabî, 2 B, MS. Cambridge University Qq 249, 10.

(4) Ibn al-Taqaqî : *al-Fakhri*, p. 11.

(5) *Diwân al-Mutanabbî* : *Sharh al-'Ukbarî*, I, p. 123.

### C. Moral Value of Libraries

It was a result of the appreciation of books, referred to above, that collections began to appear from the early times of Islam. Later on we will speak about the collections, but here a brief description will be given of the astonishing attention paid to libraries:

The house of the minister Ibn al-'Amîd was, in 355 A.H., utterly ransacked by the soldiers of Khurâsân so that no single cup or glass was left. Ibn al-'Amîd was not worried except for his valuable library about which he had no information. Soon afterwards he met his librarian who told him that the books had been saved and none had been lost. Ibn al-'Amîd was delighted and said to his librarian: «You are a man of good omen, everything can be replaced except the library». <sup>1</sup>

When Nûh b. Mansûr offered the premiership to al-Sâhib b. 'Abbâd, the latter declined it and one of the reasons given was that it would be difficult to transport his books which amounted to 400 camel-loads. Thus he preferred to stay with his books rather than have that attractive appointment. <sup>2</sup>

The Banû'Anmâr of Tripoli employed specialists and merchants who undertook to acquire books in all foreign lands for their libraries. <sup>3</sup>

The young son of al-Qâdî al-Fâdîl needed a copy of *al-Hamûsah* to read. He asked Ibn Sûrah al-Kutbî to obtain it for him, and so al-Kutbî went to al-Qâdî al-Fâdîl for a permission to take it from his library. The latter ordered all the copies he had in his library to be brought in order to choose the least important one for his son. Thus 35 copies were put before him but, examining them, he found that each of them had special

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(1) Ibn Miskawayh, VI, p. 224—225.

(2) Yâqût : *Mu'jam al-Udabâ'*, II, p. 315, Ibn Khallikân, I, p. 106.

(3) *Islamic Culture* III, 1929, p. 231. Kurd 'Alî: *Khîtal al-Shâm*, VI, p. 191.

value which made it dear to him. He declared that the whole collection was of too high a standard for a young student, and ordered Ibn Sûrah to buy a copy for the pupil.<sup>1</sup>

If we pass from Egypt towards Andalusia we will meet surprising energy in acquiring books.

Al-Hakam of Cordova, sent messengers to all parts of the East to procure books.<sup>2</sup> When Abû al-Faraj al-Isfahânî had finished his work *al-Aghânî*, al-Hakam sent a special messenger to him to obtain a copy of the book before it could be obtained by anyone else. The grateful monarch granted the author 1000 gold dinârs as a reward.<sup>3</sup>

Even laymen were desirous of having libraries in their houses though they could not use them, as the possession of a library gave the owner higher rank. In this connection I cannot refrain from quoting the following famous story from al-Maqqarî: A great book-lover, al-Hadramî used to visit every auction of books in search of a certain work in which he took a great interest. One day he found a beautiful copy of the book with a very fine commentary. He bid for it but he was outbid by another buyer; he went on raising his bid but he was always outbid until the price was far above the value of the book. Al-Hadramî then decided to give up but he wanted to see his opponent. He was furious when he learnt that the purchaser was not a scholar and knew nothing about the book. He was only attracted by its beautiful binding and the size of the book which would just fill a gap on a book-shelf in his library.<sup>4</sup>

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(1) Al-Maqrîzî : *al-Khitat*, II, p. 367.

(2) Al-Maqqarî *Nefh al-Tib*, p. 182.

(3) *Ibid* I, p. 182.

(4) *Ibid*. I, p. 218. This story leads one to cite a recent similar anecdote of an American millionaire. The rich American, who had recently furnished a house in a fashionable quarter, of New York, sent a letter to a well-known book-seller in London, ordering some books. The order contained minute details regarding the



#### D. Buildings and Arrangements

« Great care », says Olga Pinto, « was taken concerning the buildings which were to serve as public libraries. Some of them, like those of Shîrâz, Cordova and Cairo, were placed in separate structures, with many rooms for different uses: galleries with shelves in which the books were kept, rooms where the visitors could read and study, rooms set apart for those in charge of making copies of manuscripts, rooms which served for literary assemblies and even in some cases rooms for musical entertainment. All rooms were richly and comfortably fitted, on the floor were carpets and mats, where the readers in Oriental fashion squatted with crossed legs, reading and even writing.... The windows and doors were closed with curtains, the chief entrance-door having a specially heavy curtain to prevent the cold air from entering». <sup>1</sup>

The building of the great Fatimid library was so big that it consisted of 40 rooms, each of which was wide enough to hold 18,000 books. <sup>2</sup>

Al-Maqdisî gives us a precise description of the library of "Adud al-Dawlah at Shîrâz: We quote now what interests us concerning the building and arrangement. He says: «The library consisted of one long gallery with store-rooms off it . Along the wall of the gallery and the store-rooms book-cases were placed which contained many shelves. The books were arranged on the shelves and for every branch of learning there was a separate section.» <sup>3</sup> The distribution of books according to subjects was adopted in almost every library. Avicenna who

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style of binding, the size of volumes and the space they would occupy when placed on shelves; but as for the titles of books, there was no mention, their subject-matter being left entirely to the choice of the book-seller. *Islamic Culture*, 1938, Vol. XII, p. 165.

(1) *Islamic Culture*, III : 1929, p. 227.

(2) Al-Maqrîzî : *al-Khitat*. I p. 408.

(3) *Ahsan al-Taqâsîm fi Ma'rifat al-Aqâlim*, p. 449.



made use of the Samânids' library in the reign of Nûh b. Mansûr (d. 387 A.H. ) describes it as follows: « I entered a house with many chambers, in each chamber were coffer of books .... in one chamber were Arabic books and books of poetry, in another books of law and so on, in each chamber books on one of the sciences». <sup>1</sup>

Medieval Muslims had not the idea of setting books standing up in the shelves as at present.<sup>2</sup> Books thus were laid flat one above the other and therefore it was advisable not to place large books on the top of small ones in order to avoid their collapsing. <sup>3</sup>

Moreover, the method was that the bottom edges of the leaves were to face outwards instead of the backs as in modern libraries. Titles as well as the names of the authors were to be written on the bottom edge of the leaves or of the container in which a valuable book was often kept. Thus books were easily recognizable by a person searching for a particular work.<sup>4</sup> The Dâr al-Kutub in Egypt possesses a considerable number of books surviving from that time with the titles and authors' names written as described above. Officials in charge of the library kindly allowed me to replace some of them, for photographing, in the manner customary in the Middle Ages ( see Figure 7).

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- (1) Barthold : *Turkestan Down to the Mongol Invasion*, p. 9. See also Ibn Abi Usaibi"ah, II, p. 4.
  - (2) In medieval Europe books were also laid flat. It seems very probable that this method of staking books was inherited from antiquity. It was an imitation of the manner in which papyrus scrolls were stored up. Scrolls quite naturally were laid down. See *The Technique and Approach of Muslim Scholarship* by Fr. Rosenthal, published in: *Analecta Orientalia*, 24. 1947. It was also believed that in this manner, books would be protected from the dust and from the bookworm against which, however, a certain drug was known. Yâqût : *Irshâd*, VI, p. 359.
  - (3) Ibn Jumâ"ah : *Tadhkirat al-Sâmi" wa al-Mutakallim*, p. 172
  - (4) *Ibid.* pp. 171—172.



( Fig. 7 )

Medieval books arranged in the original manner





The book-cases were open and anyone could obtain the book he needed. Some of the shelves, however, were locked, as in them valuable and rare manuscripts were kept. In order to have any of these, permission had to be granted by a member of the administrative body. <sup>1</sup>

### E. Catalogues

With almost every great public or private library there is mention of a catalogue with the help of which readers might easily use the collection in the library. Besides, the contents of each section of a bookshelf were registered upon a strip of paper attached to the shelf outside; these strips had also indications of works which were incomplete or lacking in some part. <sup>2</sup>

Let us make a quick survey of the Islamic world from Transoxiana to Andalusia to notice some of the catalogues:

Continuing his description of the library of "Adud al-Dawlah (d. 372 A.H.) at Shîrâz, al-Maqdisî says: «To each section of the library there are catalogues in which the titles of the books are written.» <sup>3</sup>

Abû al-Hasan al-Bayhaqî is reported to have seen the catalogue of al-Sâhib b. "Abbâd (d. 385 A.H.) and according to him this catalogue consisted of 10 volumes. <sup>4</sup>

Avicenna is recorded to have read a list of books in the Samanîds' library at Bukhârâ. Then he asked for some books he chose which were brought to him at once. «I saw books», he says, «whose very names are unknown to many people. I have never seen such a collection either before or since.» <sup>5</sup>

In Mesopotamia catalogues had been known since the

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(1) See *Islamic Culture*, III, 1929, p. 229.

(2) See *Islamic Culture*, III, 1929, p. 229.

(3) *Ahsan al-Taqâsîm fî Ma'rîfat al-Aqâlim*, p. 449.

(4) Yâqût : *Mu'jam al-Udabâ'*, II, p. 315.

(5) Barthold : *Turkestan Down to the Mongol Invasion*, pp. 9-10.



establishment of the famous Khizânat al-*Hikmah*. In searching for a certain book, al-Ma'mûn asked for the *Fihrist* of Khizânat al-*Hikmah*, but, failing to find the book recorded in it, the Caliph wondered how such a book had been missed from the catalogue. <sup>1</sup>

The library of al-Madrasah al-Nizâmiyyah had a well-arranged catalogue which Ibn al-Jawzî had seen. He indicates that this catalogue contained 6,000 titles of books. <sup>2</sup>

At the foundation of al-Mustansir's library, Diyâ'al Dîn Ahmad, the librarian of the private library of the Caliph together with Shaikh "Abd al-"Aziz b. Dulaf was asked to receive the books, place them on the shelves in good order and register them in a catalogue according to subjects to facilitate dealing with them. <sup>3</sup>

In Egypt the Farimid library which consisted of several rooms did not seem to have a general catalogue at the beginning of its establishment. Instead «a list of the books within was fastened to the door of each room.» <sup>4</sup> The minister Abû al-Qâsim al-Jurjânî, however, gave an order in 435 for a general catalogue to be made for that library. Al-Qâdî Abû "Abd Allâh al-Qudâ"î and Abû Khalaf al-Warrâq were appointed for this purpose. <sup>5</sup>

In Spain the catalogue for the poetical works in al-Hakam's library is alleged to have consisted of 44 volumes. <sup>6</sup>

#### F. The Borrowing of Books

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«The lending of books to others is strongly recommend-

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- (1) *Rasâ'il al-Bulaghâ'*, arranged by Muh. Kurd-"Ali, pp, 479-480
  - (2) *Said al-Khâtir*, pp. 366—367.
  - (3) Ibn al-Fuwatî : *al-Hawâdith al-jâmi'ah*, p. 54.
  - (4) *The Encyclopaedia of Islam*, II, p. 1046.
  - (5) Al-Qiftî : *Akhlâq al-Mukammâ'*, p. 440.
  - (6) Al-Maqqarî : *Nafh al-Tib*, I, p. 186.

able», says Ibn Jumâ'ah, «so long as no harm to either borrower or lender is involved.»<sup>1</sup> The prophet's Tradition runs: «The first blessing that accrues to a person that is occupied with the transmission of traditions consists in the fact that he has the opportunity to lend books to others.»<sup>2</sup>

Abû al-'Atâhiyah declined on a certain occasion to lend one of his books to a particular person because he, as he said, disliked the idea of lending books. When the person, however, reminded him that divine recompense is always the result of actions which one dislikes, he lent him the book.<sup>3</sup>

Abû Hayyân al-Gharnâî did not find it necessary to buy the books he needed because, as he puts it: «Whatever book I want to have I can get on loan from any library.»<sup>4</sup>

At any rate there were some restrictions imposed to make the borrowing system work properly:

According to the regulations of Cairo Library the inhabitants of Cairo only were allowed to borrow books from it.<sup>5</sup>

A deposit was to be paid if books were to be taken outside the library, <sup>6</sup> but distinguished scholars seem to have sometimes been exempted from these restrictions. Yâqût lauds the generosity of the libraries of Marw where he was allowed to borrow 200 volumes or more without a deposit.<sup>7</sup>

A limited time was imposed in some cases. According to

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(1) *Tadhkirat al-Sâmi" wa al-Mulakallim*, p. 167.

(2) Al-Ghazzi : *al-Durr al-Nadîd* quoted by Rosenthal in his work *The Technique and Approach of Muslim Scholarship*, *Analecta Orientalia*, 24.

(3) *Tadhkirat al-Sâmi" wa al-Mulakallim*, pp. 167—168.

(4) Ibn Hajar : *al-Durar al-Kâminah*, IV, p. 309.

(5) Muhammad Farîd Wajdî : *The Encyclopaedia of the 20th century*. The rule reminds one of the present English regulations in force in most of the English libraries, if not all, which do not permit any person to take any borrowed book abroad.

(6) See Ibn al-Sâ"î : *al-Jâmi" al-Mukhtasar* I, p. 236.

(7) Yâqût : *Mu"jam al-Buldân*, VIII, p. 36.

the document by which Ibn Khaldûn bestowed his *Kitâb al-ʿIbar* on the library of Jâmî" al-Qairawân in Fâs, the manuscript was only to be lent out to trustworthy, reliable men, for two months at most, in return for a substantial deposit. <sup>1</sup>

The borrower of a book is emphatically requested to take great care of it. Even corrections in the book may be made only with the permission of the owner. No marginal notes should be made, and the blank pages at the beginning and at the end of a book must be left blank. Notes can only be made if the borrower is certain of the owner's consent. Borrowed books must not be lent to a third person nor be lodged as security. They must be returned at once at the owner's request and their retention after such a request is entirely illegal. Even without a demand for the return of the book, the borrower must not be unnecessarily slow in giving it back. He is required to be grateful for the lender's help and express his thanks to him. <sup>2</sup>

Before we close this section we should state that libraries merely for reading existed in the Muslim world. Al-Qâdî Ibn Hibbân of Nîshâbûr when leaving his books in Waqf, made the condition that such books should not under any circumstances be lent out. <sup>3</sup> This condition was imposed, too, in respect of the library of al-madrasah al-Mahmûdiyyah founded by Jamâl al-Dîn Mahmûd b. ʿAlî whose will was «No book is to be allowed out of the building.» <sup>4</sup>

#### G. The Library Staff

The staff of a library depended, of course, upon whether it was large or small, public or private. But nevertheless we have general features which appeared in almost every note-

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(1) *The Encyclopaedia of Islam*, II, p. 1047.

(2) Ibn Jumâʿah : *Tadkirat al-Sâmiʿ wa al-Mutakallim*, pp. 168—169.

(3) *The Islamic Culture*, III, 1929, p. 234.

(4) Al-Maqrîzî : *al-Khitat*, II, p. 395.

worthy library. We devote this section to a rapid survey of the library staff which, for the most part, consisted of: a librarian, translators, scribes, binders and attendants.

### *I. The Librarian :*

His duties: The librarian was generally in charge of the administrative and intellectual affairs of the library. He was to supply it with new works, supervise the cataloguing of the collection and give advice and every possible facility to the readers. He was to issue orders for the binding or repair of any book in need of it. In lending books he had to grant approval only to the people who would profit by the work and in case of several demands for one book, the poor must be preferred as the man of means could buy a copy for himself. <sup>1</sup>

One librarian was mostly able to perform this task, but in the large public libraries, sub-librarians were appointed to help him. <sup>2</sup>

The librarian's culture: The intellectual side of the librarian's work had been fully recognised since the foundation of the early Muslim libraries. Consequently learned men and notable scholars were selected to occupy this post. A few names with brief notes will be given below:

Sahl b. Hârûn, Sa'îd b. Hârûn and Salam were the librarians of Bait al-*Hikmah* at Baghdâd. According to the great authority Ibn al-Nadîm they were eloquent and learned men and authors of important works. Al-Jâhiz, the distinguished scholar, frequently quotes Sahl and Sa'îd. <sup>3</sup>

The magnificent library of al-Fath b. Khâqân was collected and arranged by 'Ali b. Yahyâ al-Munajjim (d. 275 A.H.). In his biography written by Yâqût, the reader will find how scholarly and learned this librarian was. <sup>4</sup>

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(1) Al-Subkî : *Mufid al-Ni'am*, p. 159.

(2) Yâqût : *Irshâd* VI p. 359, al-Maqrîzi : *al-Khitat* I, p. 458.

(3) *Al-Fihrist*, p. 174.

(4) Yâqût : *Irshâd* V, pp. 459—473.



Abû al-Hasan "Alî b. Muhammad al-Shâbushtî (d. 390 A.H.) was the librarian of the famous Fatimid library. He was the courtier of al "Aziz bi Allâh and the author of several works. <sup>1</sup>

Of Ibn al "Amîd's library, the celebrated historian, Ibn Miskawaih, was the librarian as has already been stated. <sup>2</sup>

Khizânat Sâbûr, which was founded by Abû Nasr Sâbûr b. Ardashîr (d. 416 A.H.), the minister under the Buwayhids, had the honour of being administered by a series of great scholars, some of whom are:

Abû al-Husain Muhammad b. Abi Shaibah <sup>3</sup>

al-Qâdî Abû "Abd Allâh al-Husain b. Hârûn al-Dabbî <sup>4</sup>

Abû Ahmad "Abd al-Salâm b. al-Husain al-Basrî (d. 405 A.H.) a contemporary and intimate friend of Abû al-"Alâ' al-Ma"arrî. <sup>5</sup>

Abû Mansûr Muhammad b. "Alî (d. 418 A.H.) <sup>6</sup>

The library of al-Madrasah al-Nizâmiyyah was looked after by librarians who were the best scholars of their times, such as:

al-Qâdî Abû Yûsuf Ya"qûb al-Isfarâ'îni <sup>7</sup> (d. 498 A.H.)

Muhammad b. Ahmad al-Abîwardî, the famous poet who occupied the post at the death of al-Isfarâ'îni (d. 508 A.H.) <sup>8</sup>

Yahyâ b. "Alî the son of al-Kharîb al-Tabrizî who was, too, a professor of literature in al-Nizâmiyyah school (d. 502 A.H.) <sup>9</sup>

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(1) Ibn Khallikân, I, p. 481.

(2) *Târîkh Ibn Miskawaih : The Eclipse of the Abbasid Caliphate*, II, p. 224.

(3,4) Ibn al-"Imâd : *Shadharât al-Dhahab*, III, p. 101.

(5) *Târîkh Baghdâd*, XI, p. 58.

(6) Abû al-"Alâ' al-Ma"arrî : *Risâlat al-Ghufûn*, p. 73, and *Târîkh Baghdâd*, III, p. 93.

(7) Yâqût : *Irshâd*, VI, p. 343.

(8) *Ibid.* pp. 341—358.

(9) *Ibid.* VII, p. 287.

"Alî b. Ahmad b. Bakrî (d. 575 A.H.) the notable writer and calligrapher. <sup>1</sup>

The librarianship of the library of al-Madrasah al-Mustansiriyyah was occupied by a number of the most eminent figures of the time, of whom we mention:

al-Shamsi b. "Alî al-Kutbî who was granted a *Khil'ah* on the opening day of the library. <sup>2</sup>

Ibn al-Sâ'î the distinguished historian (d. 674 A.H.) <sup>3</sup>

Ibn al-Fuwatî (d. 723 A.H.) the author of *al-Hawâdith al-Jâmi'ah* and many other works. <sup>4</sup> Before he was appointed to this post he had been librarian of the private library of Nasîr al-Dîn al-Tûsî. <sup>5</sup>

## II. Translators :

It is admitted that apart from divinity and language, the intellectual movement fostered by the early Muslims was based mainly upon foreign studies. Translators, then, were the bridge over the gulf. Through them foreign learning was transferred from Greek, Syriac, Old Persian and Indian to Arabic. For a list of translators the reader may see *al-Fihrist* of Ibn al-Nadîm, <sup>6</sup> but here we will confine ourselves to the translators who performed their function in the libraries.

With the name of Khâlid b. Yazîd (d. 85 A.H.) the earliest collection of books is associated. <sup>7</sup> Khâlid devoted his life to the study of Greek sciences particularly alchemy and medicine

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(1) Yâqût : *Irshâd*, V, pp. 101—105.

(2) Ibn al-Fuwatî : *al-Hawâdith al-Jâmi'ah*, p. 56.

(3) The introduction of *al-Jâmi' al-Mukhtasar* by Ibn al-Sâ'î, p. 1.

(4) See his biography at the beginning of *al-Hawâdith al-Jâmi'ah*.

(5) *Ibid*.

(6) pp. 240—242 and pp. 409—416.

(7) Muhammad Kurd "Alî : *Khitat al-Shâm*, VI, p. 189.

and according to Ibn al-Nadīm, Khâlid employed a certain Stefanus to translate books on these subjects for him <sup>1</sup> and for the supply of the library.

In Bait al-*Hikmah*, however, translation reached its zenith. Ibn al-Nadīm states that the Persian scholar Abû Sahl al-Fadl b. Nawbakht was a translator in Khizânat al-*Hikmah* under Hârûn al-Rashîd. Many Persian books were introduced through him to the Arabic tongue. <sup>2</sup> After his triumph in the battles of Ankara and 'Ammûriyyah, al-Rashîd acquired a considerable number of Greek books for the translation of which Yûhannâ b. Mâsawaih was appointed. <sup>3</sup>

Under al-Ma'mûn, the intellectual activity received the full attention of the Caliph, himself no mean scholar. Al-Ma'mûn obtained a great number of foreign works, placed them in Khizânat al-*Hikmah* and employed the best scholars of the time to translate them with useful comments. Salam al-Hajjâj b. Matar, Ibn al-Batriq, Hunain b. Ishâq, 'Amr b. al-Farrukhân and Ishâq b. Hunain are but a few of them. <sup>4</sup>

The library of Banû Mûsâ b. Shâkir was provided with a large number of ancient foreign works for the translation of which Hunain b. Ishâq, Hubaish b. al-Hasan and Thâbit b. Qurrah were employed. <sup>5</sup>

Translators seem to have disappeared from the libraries shortly after that, probably because the most useful works had already been translated and also because this immense activity had enabled Muslim scholars to evolve their own philosophy and science upon which they later relied.

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(1) *Al-Fihrist*, p. 310.

(2) *Ibid.* p. 382,

(3) Ibn Abî Usaibi'ah, I, p. 175.

(4) See *al-Fihrist*, 174, 339, 415, al-Qiftî, 242 and Ibn Abî Usaibi'ah, I : 187.

(5) Al-Qiftî 30—31, Ibn Abî Usaibi'ah I : 187 and Ibn al-Nadīm 310.

### III. Scribes « Warrāqin » \*

Mediaeval Muslims realised the necessity of having a book-producing service in their libraries. They supplied this need by employing a number of copyists in almost every considerable library. These copyists, who, in the Middle Ages, performed the function of the press in modern times, carried on their task with great success, and supplied the libraries continually with newly published works.

According to al-Subkî, the transcriber must be very careful and honest in doing his work, not to omit anything deliberately or because of his haste. He must follow the instruction given to him by his employer concerning the arrangement of the work and the number of lines on every page. He must not consent to waste his efforts in copying noxious works or works used for amusement. <sup>1</sup>

Copyists were employed in almost all the important public and private libraries, and of the great number we give here a few examples:

In Bait al-Hikmah a number of amanuenses was employed for this purpose, one of whom was "Allân al-Shu"ûbî who undertook this function under al-Rashîd and al-Ma'mûn. <sup>2</sup>

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\* I The term *Wirāqah* has been given several interpretations. The wide sense of the word covers stationery, copying, book-binding and book-selling as indicated by Ibn al-Nadîm ( *al-Fihrist* 169 ), al-Ya"qûbî ( *al-Buldân* 245 ) and Ibn Khaldûn ( *al-Muqaddimah* 296 ). But I agree with al-Sam"ânî ( *al-Ansâb folio 579 B* ), in confining the meaning of the term to copying only, a meaning which is adopted in treating the term in this section.

II Copying manuscripts was the most important way possessing books. The other two ways were by purchases and bequests. Through bequests school and mosque libraries, in particular, gained very noteworthy collections of books.

(1) *Mafîd al-Nî'am*, pp. 186—187.

(2) Ibn al-Nadîm : *al-Fihrist*, pp. 153—154.



In the private library of al-Wâqidî (d. 208 A.H.), Muhammad b. Sa'd was the transcriber, thus with Muhammad b. Sa'd's name the expression *Kâtib* al-Wâqidî is associated. <sup>1</sup>

Hunain b. Ishâq, the renowned Christian physician, had more than one penman. According to Ibn Abî Usaibi'ah <sup>2</sup> and Yâqût <sup>3</sup> a certain al-Azraq and Muhammad b. al-Hasan b. Dînâr were his scribes.

Al-Jâhiz, the distinguished scholar, had a *warrâq* called "Abd al-Wahhâb b. "Isâ in his private library. <sup>4</sup>

Ahmad b. Ahmad the brother of al-Shâfi'i was the copyist of al-Jahshayârî. <sup>5</sup>

The famous calligrapher "Alî b. Hilâl, called Ibn al-Bawwâb, was a scribe in the library of "Adud al-Dawlah at Shîrâz. On a certain occasion he carefully imitated the great calligrapher Ibn Muqlah so that Bahâ' al-Dawlah was not able to recognise the difference. <sup>6</sup>

When the Caliph al-Râdi bi Allâh discovered that a certain book had been missing from his library, al-Sûlî suggested that the scribes of the library, to whom the caliph paid regular salaries, should immediately start writing a copy which must be carefully bound by the binders of the library. <sup>7</sup>

Shaikh Zakî al-Dîn and Safî al-Dîn "Abd al-Mu'min were appointed transcribers in the library of al-Musta' sim bi Allâh <sup>8</sup>

Moving towards the East, we meet surprising activity in Syria. In the grand library of Amîn al-Dawlah b. Ghazzâlî

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(1) Ibn al-Nadîm : *al-Fihrist*, p. 141.

(2) "Uyûn al-Anbâ", I, p. 187.

(3) *Irshâd*, VI, p. 482.

(4) *Tarikh Baghdâd*, XI, pp. 28—29, al-Sam'ânî, *al-Ansâb*, p. 580 A.

(5) Yâqût : *Irshâd*, I, p. 81.

(6) Yâqût : *Irshâd*, V, pp. 446—447.

(7) Al-Sûlî : *Akhbâr al-Râdi bi Allâh wa al-Muttaqi bi Allâh*, p. 40.

(8) Al-Kutbî : *Fawâit al-Wafayât*, II, p. 18.

numerous scribes were working. Once he wanted a copy of the 80 volume history of Ibn 'Asâkir. Of his scribes, then he chose ten among whom the voluminous work was distributed. In about two years the work had been finished. <sup>1</sup>

There were also several scribes in the library of the famous historian Abû al-Fidâ the ruler of *Hamâh*. <sup>2</sup>

In Egypt this activity was in full swing. The celebrated Dâr al-'Ilm had two scribes to whom al-Maqrizî often refers. <sup>3</sup>

Groups of amanuenses had been working in the house of Ya'qûb b. Killis to supply his library with books on different subjects. *Qur'ân* Hadîth, Jurisprudence, literature and medicine were included in this work. <sup>4</sup>

Ibn Abi Usaibi'ah states that in the private library of Afra'im b. al-Zaffân a number of scribes were always copying, one of whom was Muhammad b. Sa'id b. Hishâm called Ibn Mulsâqah. <sup>5</sup>

According to 'Abd al-Latif al-Baghdâdî, al-Qâdî al-Fâdil employed several penmen whose work never ceased. <sup>6</sup>

Three copyists were continually working for the library of Muwaffaq al-Dîn b. al-Ma'rân, the private medical doctor of Saladin. The calligrapher Jamâl al-Dîn called Ibn al-Jammâlah was one of these employees. <sup>7</sup>

Crossing the Mediterranean to Andalusia we find that many calligraphists sat in al-Hakam's library and undertook to provide it with its needs. <sup>8</sup>

Al-Qâdî Abû Murrif of Cordova was a great book lover. It is recorded that he had six transcribers in his library, to each

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(1) Ibn Abi Usaibi'ah, II, p. 236

(2) *Islamic Culture*, IX : 1935, p. 135.

(3) *Al-Khitat*, I, 409, 459.

(4) Ibn Khallikân, II, p. 497.

(5) Ibn Abi Usaibi'ah, II, p. 105.

(6) *Tadhkirat al-Sâmi' wa al-Mutakallim*, p. 166 at foot

(7) Ibn Abi Usaibi'ah, II, p. 178.

(8) Ibn Khaldûn : *al-'Ibar*, IV, p. 116.

of whom a regular salary was assigned. He used to try to buy any new book and, in case of failure, a copy was to be made from it. <sup>1</sup>

We terminate this section with an astonishing statement «In the grand library of the Banû 'Ammâr at Tripoli, 180 scribes were employed for copying MSS. and of them 30 persons were constantly at work in the library». <sup>2</sup>

#### IV. Binders

After the previous section about scribes it would be sufficient to record that the word *Mujallid* (binder) generally appears side by side with the word *Nâsikh* (scribe) wherever the latter is mentioned in connection with public and private libraries. <sup>3</sup>

An excellent study on « the <sup>3</sup>Islamic Book » was produced by the late Sir Thomas Arnold and Professor Adolf Grohmann from which we quote the following paragraph: « In 'Irâq and Andalusia in particular, special stress was laid on the binding of books. In Spain, Malaga was above all a treasure-house of exquisite leather-work. Private collectors and the really grandiose magnificence of Muslim princes, who encouraged the foundation of great libraries, contributed not a little to this unparalleled development of the art of book-making in the Middle Ages.» <sup>4</sup>

From this work and from «*Islamic Bookbinding*» by F. Sarre, we present the accompanying illustrations. ( See Figs 8,

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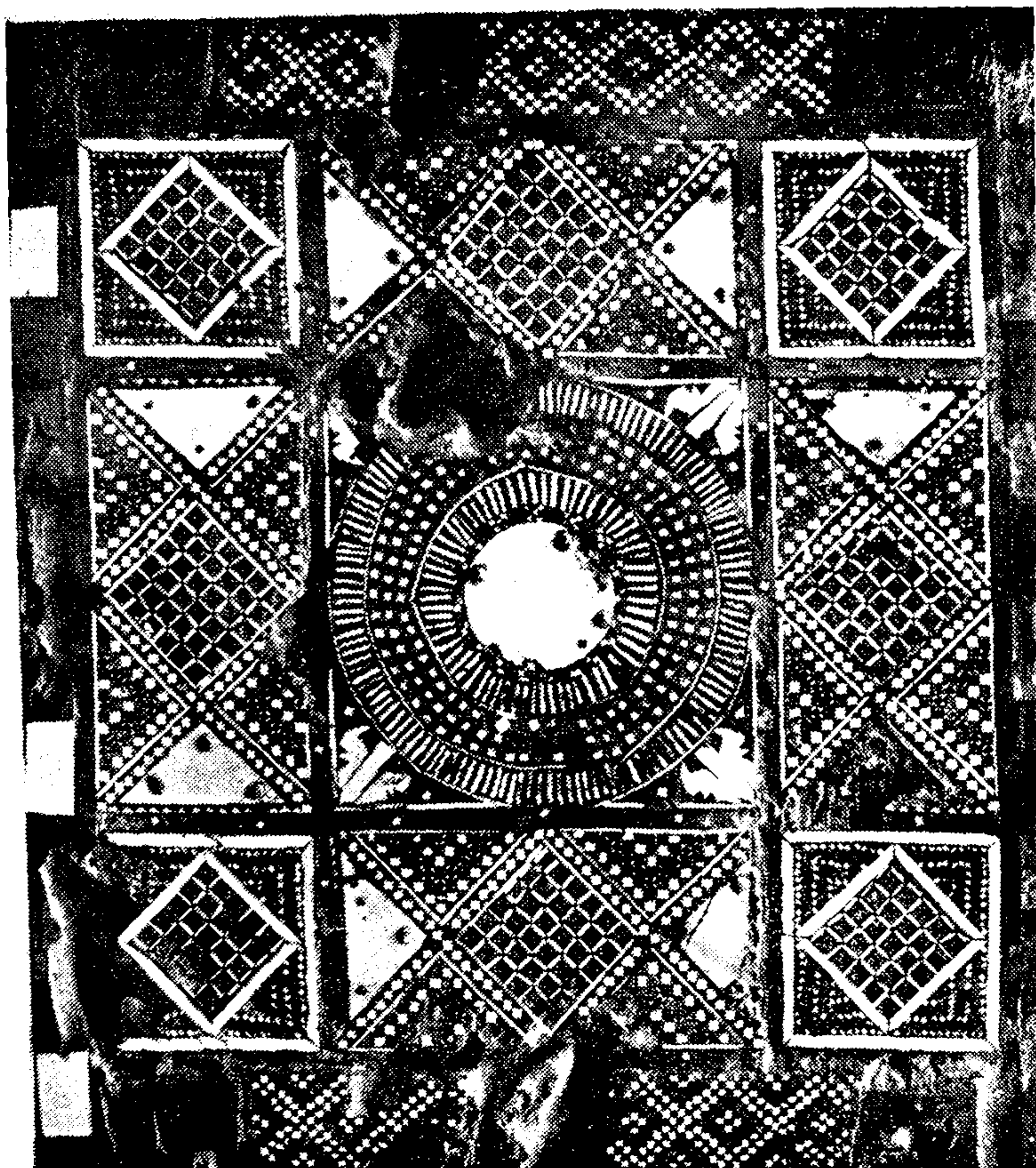
(1) Ibn Bashkuwâl : *al-Silah*. I, pp. 304—305.

(2) *Islamic Culture* IX : 1935, p. 135, See also *Islamic Culture* III : 1929, p. 231. Both are quoted from the *History of Ibn al-Furât* MS. Vienna fol. 36.

(3) *Al-Fihrist*, p. 14, al-Maqdisî : *Ahsan al-Taqâsim*, pp. 43, 44, 100, al-Sûlî, *Akhbâr*, p. 40, Ibn Khaldun, IV, p. 146, al-Maqrîzî : *al-Khitat*, I, p. 459, al-Maqqarî, I, p. 182, Ibn Jumâ'ah, 166 and 'Awwâd : *Khazâ'in al-Kutub fi al-'Iraq*, p. 133.

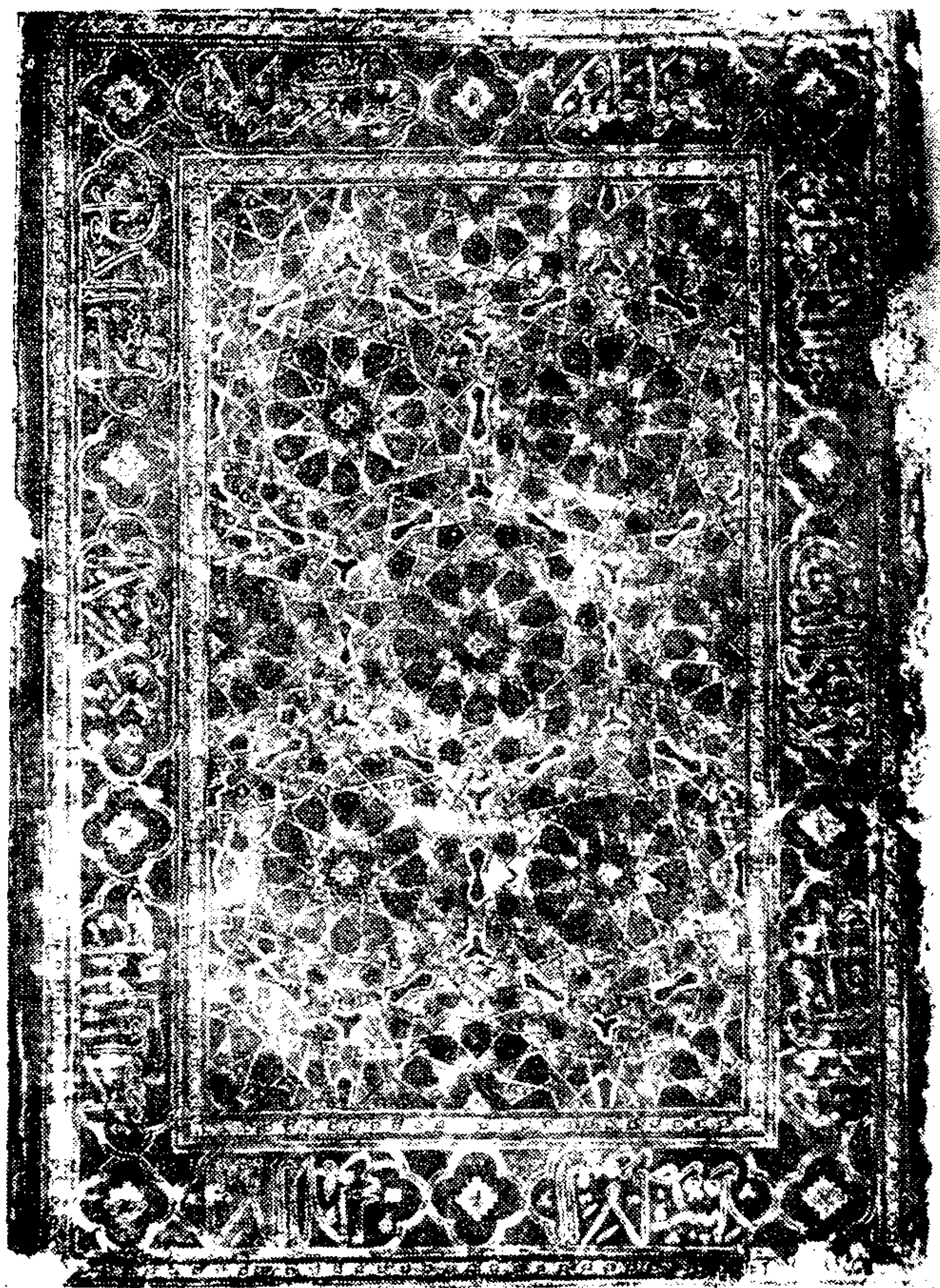
(4) pp. 31—32.





( Fig. 8 )  
Early Egyptian binding





( Fig 9 )

Quran binding framed by a border of writings consisting of quotations from the Quran

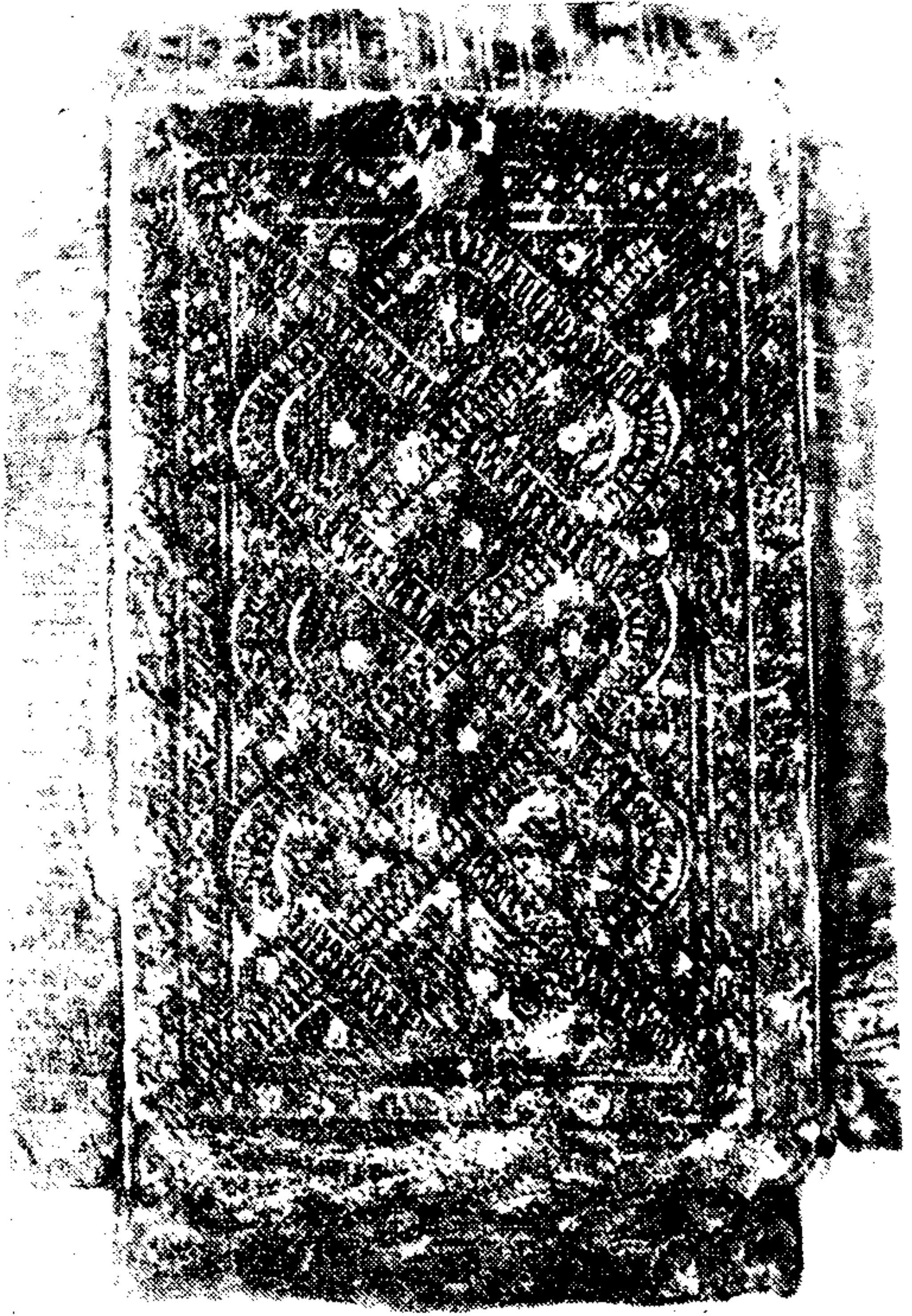




( Fig. 10 )

Arabic binding of a *Qur'ân*





( Fig. 11 )

Arabic binding of a *Qur'ân*

9, 10, and 11 ).

Bookbinding started in a simple manner, but it developed rapidly until it became a fine art . Ibn al-Nadîm tells us that the bindings had been very stiff until in al-Kûfa, a better way of tanning was invented by which the leather became soft and limp. <sup>1</sup> Later on the art was much developed, and much produced in ornamentation and illustration of leather-bound books.<sup>2</sup>

( Books were, «says "Inâyatullâh.,» tastefully bound in leather. The earliest known Islamic book-bindings are the work of the Egyptian craftsmen, and may be assigned to the 8th or 9th century (A.D.). When the art of book-binding developed, stamping and tooling (both blind and gold tooling) became the most common techniques of the Muslim book-binder.) <sup>3</sup>

#### V. Attendants. « *Munâwilîn* »

Mention of *Munâwilîn* is often made among the library staff. In this connection we cite the Arabic verse attributed to Abû Sa'îd al-'Aqîlî in which reference is made to al-Sûlî's attendants. Abû Sa'îd says: «Whenever we go to al-Sûlî, who has the richest library, to seek an explanation of any point, he orders his attendants to bring a certain group of books».<sup>4</sup>

Mention of attendants in the Fâtîmid library is to be found in al-Maqrizî. <sup>5</sup> A girl called Tawfîq is reported to have worked as a *munâwil* in Khizânat Sâbûr at Baghdâd. <sup>6</sup>

The library of al-Madrasah al-Mustansiriyah had men of

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(1) *Al-Fihrist*, p. 32.

(2) *Islamic Culture*, IX : 1935, p. 138.

(3) *Islamic Culture*, XII : 1938, p. 168.

(4) Ibn Khallikân, I, p. 727, and the Arabic verse is :

أعلم الناس خزانه	أما الصولي شيخ
نبتغي منه إبانته	كلما جئنا اليه
رزمة العلم فلانه	قال يا غلمان هاتوا

(5) *Al-Khitat*, I, p. 458.

(6) See *Risâlat al-Ghufrân* of Abû al-'Alâ' al-Ma'arrî, p. 73.



learning for the function of *Munâwilûn* some of whom are:

al-Jamâ' Ibrahîm b. Hudhayfah who received the Caliph's *Khil'ah* at the opening ceremony. <sup>1</sup>

Muhammad b. Sa'îd and his son 'Abd al-Rahîm whose biographies appear in *al-Durar al-Kâminah*. <sup>2</sup>

#### Financial position of the library

Like schools, libraries were mostly endowed for the up-keep of the building, price of the newly bought books and the salaries of the staff. Varied instances of generosity are recorded in respect of the library finances, of which we give some examples:

The Caliph al-Ma'mûn used to give Hunain b. Ishâq gold pieces to the weight of the books which Hunain translated into Arabic. <sup>3</sup>

Al-Wâthiq devoted his attention to the translation of foreign books. Yahya b. Mâsawaih became his righthand man, and al-Wâthiq showered endless presents on him, and on one occasion he gave him *dirhams* amounting to three *lakhs*. <sup>4</sup>

The recompense assigned to the translators and scribes of Muhammad b. 'Abd al-Malik al-Zayyât is reported to have amounted to about 2000 *dînârs* monthly. <sup>5</sup>

More details are given in relation to the annual budget of al-Hâkim's library. Al-Maqrîzî <sup>6</sup> states that its expenditure was distributed as follows:

Paper for the copyists (probably including their salaries)	90 <i>dînârs</i>
Salary of the librarian	48 »
Wage of the attendant	15 »

(1) Ibn al-Fuwatî : *al-Hawâdith al-Jâmi'ah*, pp. 55-56.

(2) Vol. II, p. 360.

(3) Ibn Abî Usaibi'ah, I, p. 187.

(4) Khuda Buksh : *Islamic civilization*, p. 279.

(5) Ibn Abî Usaibi'ah, I, p. 206.

(6) *Al-Khitat*, I, 459.

Repairing books ( probably including the binder's wage)	12 dīnârs
Free paper, ink and pens	12    »
Mats from "Abbadân	10    »
Water	10    »
Felt carpets for the winter	5    »
Hassocks for the winter	4    »
Repairing the door curtain	1    »

The librarian of al-Mustansiriyyah school was given 10 pounds of bread, 4 pounds of meat and ten dinars a month. And the monthly emoluments of *al-munâwil* of the same library was 4 pounds of bread, a certain amount of cooked food and 2 dīnârs. <sup>1</sup>

#### TYPES OF LIBRARY \*

Three distinguishable types of library must be spoken about separately. In putting the three types in order of the relative importance of their contribution to education, we are not concerned with the social position of the founder, whether he was a Caliph or a common citizen. What concerns us is the foundation itself. Consequently the three types must be studied in the following order:

Public libraries, semi-public and private ones.

##### 1. Public Libraries

These libraries existed mainly in mosques and educational institutes, and they were very numerous so that one can hardly find a mosque or an institute without a collection of books

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(1) Gurgis "Awad : *Khazâ'in al-Kutub al-Qadimah fi al-"Iraq*, p. 165.

\* References to many libraries have already been made in the foregoing sections. In giving examples of Muslim libraries we will pass over those previously mentioned in order to have the space for description of others. Only libraries of special significance may be referred to again for further details.

placed at the disposal of its students. Thus different groups of various social classes made use of these collections. In the following study some few examples will be given, as space will not, of course, allow us to mention all:

#### 1. *Bait al-Hikmah*

Who was the founder of Bait al-*Hikmah* is still a disputed question, but I feel confident that Hârûn al-Rashîd was the real founder of the establishment. It is recorded, as has already been stated, that "Allân al-Shu"ûbî was a copyist for al-Rashîd and al-Ma'mûn in Bait al-*Hikmah* <sup>1</sup> and that Abû Sahl al-Fadl b. Nawbakht was a translator under al-Rashîd in Khizânat al-*Hikmah*. <sup>2</sup>

Ya'hyâ b. Khâlid was the supervisor of the intellectual movement. He sent for Pundits from India and it was through these Pundits that the hitherto concealed treasures of the Hindus became accessible to Muslims. To Persians' works special attention was paid as the Barmecides were of Persian extraction. <sup>3</sup> Al-Rashîd, too obtained Greek works, after his victory over the Byzantine troops, for the translation of which Yuhannâ b. Mâsawaih was appointed. <sup>4</sup>

Indeed this institute gained its fame under the patronage of al-Ma'mûn who was a well-qualified and free-minded Caliph. Al-Ma'mûn did his best to enrich this library. Even an autograph of "Abd al-Muttalib written on parchment was obtained for it. <sup>5</sup> According to al-Ma'mûn's request, the ruler of Sicily sent him the Greek collection of books which had been stored up and inaccessible in a certain house. Al-Ma'mûn was very glad to receive this collection and gave it to Sahl b. Hârûn the librarian of Bait al-*Hikmah*. <sup>6</sup> Another

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(1) Ibn al-Nadim : *al-Fihrist*, p. 151.

(2) *Ibid.* p. 182.

(3) Khuda Bukhsh : *Islamic Libraries*, 19th century, LII, p. 128.

(4) Ibn Abî Usaibî'ah, I, pp. 175, 187.

(5) *Al-Fihrist*, pp. 7—8.

(6) Ibn Nubâtah al-Misrî : *Sarh al-'Uyûn*, p. 106.

story asserts that after having gained the upper hand in a war against the Byzantine Empire, al-Ma'mûn corresponded, during a truce, with the Emperor asking him for a selection of ancient Greek works. Having received a positive answer, al-Ma'mûn sent al-Hajjâj b. Matar, Ibn al-Batrîq and Salam who chose the best books, and in Bait al-Hikmah the whole collection was placed and translated into Arabic. <sup>1</sup>

Bait al-Hikmah was the first public library on a large scale. <sup>2</sup> It contained valuable books on all the sciences and in various languages. It was a very important centre for the intellectual development of Medieval Muslims.

Discreditable events affected the glory of Bait al-Hikmah. The first neglect this institute suffered was caused by the choosing of Sâmarra as the capital of the Muslim Empire instead of Baghdâd. Many other incidents had a bad effect upon this intellectual centre, but it seems that Bait al-Hikmah survived all these troubles and, although it lost its significance, it continued to exist for some centuries. Ibn al-Nadîm in the last quarter of the 4th century A.H. copied the Ethiopian characters from it. <sup>3</sup> And al-Qalqashandî records that this library existed till the fall of Baghdâd into the hands of the Tartars in 656 A.H. and then the library disappeared along with many other things. <sup>4</sup>

## 2. *The Haidari Library at al-Najaf*

This library still exists at the present time and it belongs to the shrine where 'Alî b. Abî Tâlib's body is buried. Thus we can imagine how much attention has been paid to this library by the Shî'a leaders and followers.

No exact date is known for its foundation, but 'Adud al-

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(1) Ibn al-Nadîm : *al-Fihrist*, p. 339.

(2) *The Encyclopaedia of Islam*, II, p. 1045.

(3) *Al-Fihrist*, p. 29.

(4) Al-Qalqashandî : *Subh al-A'shâ*, I, p. 466 *Miftâh al-Sa'âdah*, I, p. 240.



Dawlah (d. 372 A.H.) is reported to have been one of the most important persons whose names are associated with this institution. I visited this library on the 2nd of December 1950 and here I append some of the observations I made at that time:

The library occupies a big room on the eastern side of the shrine court. The library lost its significance as a public institution, and access to it, at the present time, needs permission from the Shaikh of the establishment. It has no existing catalogue, and the books, though valuable, are not well arranged. It contains Persian and Arabic manuscripts of inestimable worth most of which are autograph works or at least bear the handwriting of their authors. The group of *Mushafs* I have seen there is the most precious part of the collection. They are beautifully written, perfectly bound and wonderfully illuminated and decorated. Besides there are many other works of particular value such as a copy of *al-Masâ'il al-Shîrâziyyah* by Abû 'Alî al-Fârisî which the author himself has corrected, the first volume of *Mu'jam al-Udabâ'* written down by the author, *al-Taqrîb* by Abû Hayyân al-Andalusî in his own handwriting, *Nahj al-Balâghah* which is attributed to 'Alî b. Abî Tâlib, *al-Mu'tabar Min al-Hikmah* by Hibat al-Dîn b. 'Alî written in 538 A.H. and a considerable number of Shi'ah work with special attention paid to the study of the *Imamate* and *Wisaya-te*. The Qur'anic verses which are reported to have been written by 'Alî b. Abî Tâlib himself are placed not in the library room but in the Shrine.

### 3. *Ibn Sawwâr's Library at al-Basrah*

Abû 'Alî b. Sawwâr was a learned man and a patron of knowledge. He founded two libraries; one in Râm Hurmuz and this one about which we are speaking. Students resorted to both for reading and copying and the founder offered them regular rations there. According to al-Maqdisî the library of al-Basrah was larger and busier. Besides, a learned man sat

in it to teach scholastic theology <sup>1</sup> as has already been stated.

A reference has been given to this library in *Maqâmât al-Harîrî* who says: (The speech is put into the mouth of al-Hârith al-Basrî).

When I returned home I visited the local library, the club of the lovers of letters, and the meeting-place of natives and foreigners. Then a man with a thick beard and of squalid appearance arrived and sat receiving no attention, but when he started talking he attracted an audience with his authoritative knowledge. <sup>2</sup>

#### 4. *Khizânat Sâbûr « Dâr al-‘Ilm »*

Khizânat Sâbûr is one of the best libraries which ever existed in the Muslim world. It was established in 381 A.H. by Abû Nasr Sâbûr b. Ardashîr (d. 416 A.H.) the minister under the Buwayhids, in a part of Baghdâd called « Bain al-Sûrain » in the quarter Karkh. <sup>3</sup> «Expense was not spared in furnishing it with a choice library; there were a hundred copies of the *Qur’ân* written by the Banû Muqlah and 10400 volumes belonging to other departments of literature, most of them either autographs or such as had been in the possession of famous men. Sâbûr provided funds for the maintenance of the establishment » <sup>4</sup> The library is recorded to have been a centre for eminent persons and learned men among whom discussion and debate often took place. Abû al-‘Alâ’ al-Ma’arrî, the great philosopher (d. 449 A.H.) frequently visited it and when he was at Baghdâd it became his favourite resort. <sup>5</sup>

Many works were bestowed on this library by book-lovers

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(1) *Ahsan al-Taqâsîm*, p. 413.

(2) *Maqâmât*, p. 15.

(3) *Yâqût : al-Buldân*, II, p. 342.

(4) Margoliouth : *Biography of Abû al-‘Alâ’ al-Ma’arrî* at the beginning of *Rasâ’il Abû al-‘Alâ’*, p. XXIV.

(5) *Rasâ’il Abû al-‘Alâ’*, p. 34.

or authors, such as Ahmad b. 'Alī al-Kātib<sup>1</sup> and Jibrīl b. Bakhtīshū''<sup>2</sup>.

#### 5. *Al-Sharīf al-Radī's Dār al-'Ilm*

The intellectual centre established at Baghdād by al-Sharīf al-Radī (d. 406 A.H.) was called Dār al-'Ilm. This institute had a very rich and well - arranged library. Students flocked to this foundation to profit by this excellent collection and to listen to the lectures given by the founder. Full expenses of the students were provided from the private treasury of al-Sharīf al-Radī.<sup>3</sup>

#### 6. *The Library of al-Zaidī's Mosque*

The mosque and the library were founded by Abū al-Hasan 'Alī b. Ahmad al-Zaidī (d. 575 A.H.). It is stated that when 'Adud al-Dīn Muhammad reoccupied the ministerial office of al-Mustadī' bi Amr Allāh after he ( 'Adud al-Dīn ) had been dismissed, the latter wrote to the Caliph asking his permission to send 1000 dīnārs to al-Zaidī because he had vowed to do so in case of taking the post again. The Caliph not only permitted him but ordered another 1000 dīnārs to be sent to al-Zaidī on the Caliph's behalf. With the money, however, al-Zaidī established the mosque and set up the library.<sup>4</sup> Before his death al-Zaidī added his private collection to this library to be available to all students and seekers of knowledge.<sup>5</sup> Three other scholars and book-lovers namely Abū al-Khattāb al-'Ulaimī<sup>6</sup> (d. 574 A.H.) Abū al Khair Subaiḥ al-

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(1) Yâqût : *Irshād* I, p. 242.

(2) Ibn Abī Usaibi'ah, I, p. 146.

(3) Gurgis 'Awād : *Khazā'in al-Kutub*, p. 231.

(4) Sibī b. al-Jawzī : *Mir'āt al-Zamān*, VIII, p. 227 quoted by 'Awād pp. 154-155.

(5) *Al-Hadārah* ( Periodical ) No. 33, p. 8, quoted by 'Awād, p. 155.

(6) *Al-Hadārah* ( Periodical ) No. 34, p. 7, quoted by 'Awād, pp. 155-156.

Habashî <sup>1</sup> (d. 584 A.H.) and the great historian Yâqût al-Hamawî <sup>2</sup> (d. 626 A.H.) left their collections as *Waqf* to the same library.

#### 7. *Dâr al-'Ilm*

Saturday Jumâdâ 10th 395 A.H. was the opening day of *Dâr al-'Ilm* or *Dâr al-Hikmah* established in Cairo by the Fâtimid Caliph al-Hâkim bi Amr Allâh. Before the opening day preparations had been in progress to make this institute eclipse the fame of the Abbasid Bait al-Hikmah under al-Ma'mûn. The building was decorated and provided with beautiful furniture. Costly curtains were hung upon its doors and corridors and the necessary staff was chosen. Orders were given for the transference of books from the Palace library so that *Dâr al-'Ilm* gained the best collection ever possessed by a king. The collection contained works on different subjects as well as a number of autographs. Readers of the *Qur'ân*, astrologers, grammarians, philologists and medical doctors were appointed to teach. Many facilities such as paper, ink and pens were provided for free use. Free access was given to all classes without distinction. Thus students thronged in, some to listen to a lecture, others to read and copy.<sup>3</sup>

Debates were frequently held between scholars in *Dâr al-'Ilm*, and that very often led to arguments and disputes.<sup>4</sup>

*Dâr al-Hikmah* continued to exist with fluctuating fortunes until the beginning of the 6th century. Then al-Malik al-Afdal discovered that *Dâr al-Hikmah* had been used by certain people for heretical purposes. He then ordered the immediate closing of the institution. <sup>5</sup> In 517 A.H. al-Ma'mûn al-Batâ'ihî

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(1) *Al-Hadârah* (Periodical) No. 34, p. 7 quoted by 'Awâd, p. 155.

(2) Ibn al-'Imâd : *Shadhurât al-Dhahab*, V : 122.

(3) Al-Maqrîzî : *al-Khitat*, I, pp. 458—459, II, p. 342

(4) G Zaidân : *Târîkh al-Tamaddun al-Islâmî*, III, p. 210.

(5) Al-Maqrîzî : *al-Khitat*, I, p. 459.



reopened Dâr al-ʿIlm in response to the Caliph's order.<sup>1</sup> The institute resumed its vitality and carried on with its task until the fall of the Fâtimid dynasty. Saladin destroyed it and in its place he founded a Shâfiʿî school.<sup>2</sup>

#### 8. *Libraries in Schools*

Libraries were included in schools when the latter flourished in Irâq, Khurâsân, Syria and Egypt. We can hardly find a single school without a collection of books the value of which depended upon the financial support of the school itself.

In each of his schools, Nizâm al-Mulk founded a library and provided it with a large collection of books. The library adjoining al-Nizâmiyyah of Baghdad was the largest of such libraries, being attached to the largest of the founder's schools. Among the collection Nizâm al-Mulk put in it was the 10 volume *Gharib al-Hadith* by Ibrahîm al-Harbî in the handwriting of Abû ʿAmr b. Haiawaih which is said to have been a unique copy.<sup>3</sup>

In 589 A.H. the caliph al-Nâsir li Dîn Allâh ordered the renewal of his library and transferred to it thousands of books from his private library. Abû al-Rashîd Mubashshir al-Hâsib was trusted to make a suitable selection for it.<sup>4</sup>

In the first half of the seventh century this library received another important collection the value of which was 1000 dînârs. The donor this time was Muhib al-Dîn b. al-Najjâr (d. 643 A.H.).<sup>5</sup>

Al-Mustansiriyyah school had a rich and well-arranged library to which 130 loads of books were transferred from the private library of the Caliph.<sup>6</sup> According to Ibn ʿInabah al-

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(1) Al-Maqrîzî : *al-Khitat*, pp. 459-460.

(2) Ibn Khaldûn : *al-ʿIbar*, IV, p. 79.

(3) Al-Subkî : *Tabaqât al-Shâfiʿiyyah*, III, p. 230.

(4) Al-Qiftî, 269.

(5) Al-Kutbî : *Fuwât al-Wafayât*, II, p. 261.

(6) Al-Suyûtî : *Târîkh al-Khulafâʾ*, p. 303.

"Alawî these books numbered 80,00 volumes. <sup>1</sup> In this library, al-Maqrîzî relates, there was a copy of *Kitâb al-Yâsah* (= code (Mongol) which contained the edicts issued by Ghenghis Khân to his people. <sup>2</sup> It possessed, too, a copy of *Târikh Baghdâd* in 14 volumes written by the author himself. <sup>3</sup>

Nûr al-Dîn, the founder of schools in Damascus is reported to have presented a great number of books for the seekers of knowledge. <sup>4</sup> The medical section was placed in the library of the big hospital at Damascus which was, as Muslim hospitals have been before and since, a centre for medical education. <sup>5</sup>

Having established his school in Cairo in 580 A.H., al-Qâdî al-Fâdil presented it with 100,000 volumes on various subjects to be at the disposal of its students. <sup>6</sup>

To al-Madrasah al-"Adiliyyah al-Kubrâ (called after al-Malik al-"Adil Safadîn d. 615 A.H.), the rich collection of Qutb al-Dîn al-Nishâbûrî was donated. <sup>7</sup>

Sharaf al-Dîn b. "Urwah (d. 620 A.H.) put his books as a *waqf* for students in Dâr al-Hadith al-"Urwiyyah, the institute called after him. <sup>8</sup>

In al-Madrasah al-Sahibiyyah erected by al-Sahib Safi al-Dîn b. "Abd Allâh (d. 622 A.H.) there was a large free library. <sup>9</sup>

Al-Madrasah al-Bahnasiyyah built by the minister Abû al-Ashbâl al-Hârith (d. 628 A.H.) received, among other endowments, the private library of its founder. <sup>10</sup>

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(1) Ibn "Inabah : *"Umdat al-Tâlib*, p. 195. MS. Baghdad.

(2) Al-Khitat, II, p. 220.

(3) Ilâjî Khalîfâ : *Kashf al-Zunûn*, I : 171.

(4) Al-Nu"îmî : *al-Dâris fî Târikh al-Madâris*, I, p. 608.

(5) Ibn Abî Usaibi"ah, II, p. 155. See also *Târikh al-Mâristânât fî al-Islâm* by Ahmad "Isa Bey.

(6) Al-Maqrîzî : *al-Khitat*, II, p. 366.

(7) Abû Shâmah : *al-Rawdatain*. I, p. 214, al-Nu"îmî, I, p. 361.

(8) Al-Nu"îmî, p. 82.

(9) Al-Maqrîzî : *al-Khitat*, II, p. 371.

(10) Al-Nu"îmî : I, p. 215.

Al-Amîr Sayf al-Dîn al-Husâmî is recorded not only to have appointed teachers for his school but also to have provided it with a large library.<sup>1</sup>

## II. Semi-Public Libraries

These libraries were not public; as access was not permitted to all classes of people, nor were they private as their owners lacked either the inclination or the leisure to use them. They belonged to some Caliphs and kings who had formed them mainly to bring them cultural kudos.

Admission was allowed only to people of high standing as al-Maqdisî puts it concerning the library of "Adud al-Dawlah at Shîrâz.<sup>2</sup> Avicenna, the famous philosopher was allowed to enter the Sâmânîd library but only after obtaining special permission.<sup>3</sup>

Of this type of library the Muslim world has a considerable number. The following are a few examples:

### 1. *The Library of al-Nâsir li Dîn Allâh*

The personality of al-Nâsir and his long reign<sup>4</sup> gave him the opportunity to restore its dignity to the caliphate. Among other things he paid attention to intellectual matters and thus he is stated to have possessed one of the most remarkable libraries in Islam. We can imagine how large this library was if we remember that part of the collection was divided into three sections. Two of them formed the libraries of Dâr al-Mas-nâh and al-Ribât al-Khâtûnî al-Saljûqî and the third section was presented to the library of al-Nizâmiyyah.<sup>5</sup> The section granted to al-Nizâmiyyah is described by Ibn al-Athîr as con-

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(1) Al-Maqrîzî : *al-Khitat*, II, p. 387.

(2) *Ahsan al-Taqâsim*, p. 449.

(3) Nicholson : *Literary History of the Arabs*, pp 265--266.

(4) He reigned from 575 to 622 A.H.

(5) Al-Qiftî, p. 269.

taining thousands of unique and valuable books. <sup>1</sup>

## 2. *The Library of al- Musta'sim bi Allâh*

Mention is made of this library in several sources. Ibn al-Fuwarî states that in 641 A.H., the year following the accession of al-Musta'sim to the Caliphate, the Caliph ordered a big library to be founded in his residence. Poets of the time were so impressed by its marvels that many of them composed verses describing its glory. Ibn al-Fuwarî quotes one of these verses which is ascribed to Safî al-Dîn "Abd Allâh b. Jamîl. <sup>2</sup> Al-Kutbî reports that al-Musta'sim founded a library for which the best two scribes were chosen. <sup>3</sup> Ibn al-Taqtâqî refers to two libraries which belonged to al-Musta'sim. The old one was put in the charge of Sadr al-Dîn "Alî b. al-Nayyâr and the new one was looked after by Safî al-Dîn "Abd al-Mun'im al-Armawî. <sup>4</sup>

The two libraries are again mentioned by Ibn "Abd al-Haqq al-Baghdâdî. <sup>5</sup>

Al-Musta'sim was not an intellectual. It is recorded that he used to spend some time in Khizanat al-Kutub without much interest. <sup>6</sup>

## 3. *The Library of the Fâtimid Caliphs*

Ibn al-Athîr speaks about a great number of books and documents al-Mahdî inherited from his ancestors. This collection had been stolen when al-Mahdî was on his way to Sajelmâsah but Abû al-Qâsim the son of al-Mahdî, however, was able to restore it later. <sup>7</sup>

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(1) *Al-Kâmil Fi al-Târikh*, XII, p. 67.

(2) See *al-Hawâdith al-Jâmi'ah*, p. 184.

(3) *Fawât al-Wafayât*, II, p. 18.

(4) *Al-Fakhrî Fi al-Adâb al-Sultâniyyah*, p. 295.

(5) *Marâsid al-Ittilâ'*, III, p. 162.

(6) *Al-Fakhrî*, p. 295.

(7) *Al-Kâmil Fi al-Târikh*, VIII, p. 29.



One may presume that this collection was taken to Cairo with the rest of the property which al-Mu'izz brought with him from North Africa. If so this collection can be considered the basis of the great Fâtîmîd library.

Fâtîmîd Caliphs were extremely anxious to have in their Palace library all the existing copies of many works. This desire explains to us why their library possessed extraordinary numbers of certain books, and yet they were ready to buy further copies generously. Accordingly it is reported that this library had:

2400 *Mushafs* some of which were written by famous calligraphers, beautifully bound and illuminated. <sup>1</sup>

1200 copies of *Târîkh al-Tabarî* one of which was an autograph. <sup>2</sup>

100 copies of *al-Jamharah* by Ibn Duraid. <sup>3</sup>

Some thirty copies of *Kitâb al-'Ain* by al-Khalîl. <sup>4</sup>

The whole collection seems to have reached a fantastic number although the question is very much disputed. Abû Shâmah states from hearsay that the number was 2,000,000 <sup>5</sup> and al-Maqrîzî quotes many numbers but he inclines to believe that the number was 1,600,000 volumes. <sup>6</sup> According to him this large collection contained works on jurisprudence of various sects, grammar, language, Traditions, history, astrology and alchemy. <sup>7</sup> Abû Shâmah and al-Maqrîzî say that this library was one of the wonders of the world, and they agree that it was unique among libraries of Medieval Islam. <sup>8</sup>

This rich library continued until the civil war which broke out at the time of al-Mustansir. During this war the barbarian

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(1) Al-Maqrîzî : *al-Khitat*, I, p. 408.

(2) *Ibid.* I, p. 409. See Abû Shâmah ( *Al-Rawdatain*, I, p. 200 ) who gives 1220 as the alleged numbers.

(3,4) Al-Maqrîzî : *al-Khitat*, I, p. 408.

(5) *Al-Rawdatain* I, p. 200.

(6) *Al-Khitat*, I, p. 409.

(7) *Ditto*

(8) *Al-Rawdatain*, I, p. 200, *al-Khitat*, I, p. 409.

Turks looted the capital, demolished the valuable collections of arts, and, worst of all, destroyed the incomparable library. Rare manuscripts went to light the fire, the bindings were used to mend the shoes of the soldiers and many torn volumes were thrown away wantonly from which the heaps called *Tilâl al-Kutub* were formed. <sup>1</sup>

When Badr al-Jamâlî received the leadership of Egyptian affairs, he recovered as many books as possible and thus he rebuilt the library again. This collection remained in the Fâtimid Palace until the overthrow of the dynasty when Saladin dissolved the library destroying the heretical books, selling some in auctions and presenting the rest to his secretaries al-Qâdî al-Fâdîl and 'Imâd al-Dîn al-Isfahânî. <sup>2</sup>

Before ending this study of semi-public libraries, I wish to remark that a considerable number of such collections was transferred to public libraries as we have seen in the case of al-Nâsir's library and the Palace library of the Fâtimîds, a great part of which collection was removed to Dâr al-'Ilm.

### III. Private Libraries

These libraries were formed by scholars for their private use. We cannot possibly find a learned man without a collection of books of his own. Thus one can assert that the number of these libraries was almost equal to the number of learned people. Let us select a few names for brief notes on their collections.

#### 1. *The Library of al-Fath b. Khâqân ( d. 247 A H. )*

Al-Fath b. Khâqân was a great book-lover. He always had a book with him which he carried tucked up in his sleeve, and

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(1) Al-Maqrîzî : *al-Khitat*, I, p. 409. See Stanly Poole : *History of Egypt*, p. 149.

(2) Abû Shâmah, *al-Rawdatain*, I, p. 267, al-Maqrîzî; *al-Khitat*, I, p. 409.

whenever he found a spare moment he would take it out and begin to read it. <sup>1</sup> "Alî b. Yahyâ al-Munajjim was chosen to select books for al-Fatî and to arrange a library for him. "Alî transferred some books from his own library, added them to al-Fatî's collection and to other books he was able to obtain. Thus he formed a unique and magnificent library.<sup>2</sup> Many other works were written for this library, particularly by al-Jâhiz the celebrated scholar. Ibn al-Nadîm describing it says «Nobody has ever seen a better collection in number or in beauty.» <sup>3</sup>

## 2. *The Library of Hunain b. Ishâq ( d. 264 A.H. )*

Hunain, the medical scholar, perfectly mastered the four most useful languages of his time, namely Greek, Syriac, Persian and Arabic. <sup>4</sup> Thus his library<sup>5</sup> was characterised by having a great collection of medical books and books in different languages. Indeed the efforts which were undertaken by Hunain to obtain books made his library one of the richest in medieval Islâm. He travelled through many countries searching for books and always returned with a remarkable number.<sup>6</sup> Besides, his library must have been enriched by the fantastic number of his translations and his original works.<sup>6</sup>

## 3. *The Library of Ibn al-Khashshâb ( d. 567 A.H. )*

Ibn al-Khashshâb, who was the best grammarian of his time and an authority in many other branches of learning, was a great book lover. But his financial position was so bad that he

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(1) *Al-Fihrist*, p. 169, Yâqût : *Irshâd*, VI, p. 56, al-Kutbî : *Fa-wât*, II, p. 123.

(2) *Al-Fihrist*, p. 207, Yâqût : *Irshâd*, V, p. 459. al-Kutbî : *Fa-wât*, II, p. 123.

(3) *Al-Fihrist*, p. 169.

(4) Ibn Abî Usaibi"ah, I, p. 186.

(5) *Al-Fihrist*, p. 409. al-Qiftî, p. 173, Ibn Abî Usaibi"ah, I, p. 187.

(6) Al-Qiftî, pp. 173—174, Ibn Abî Usaibi"ah, I, pp. 197—200.

was not able to enrich his library as he wished. His love of books seems to have impelled him to acquire them even by illegal means. In auctions or book-shops he used on the sly to tear out one or two leaves from the book he intended to buy, and then point out the defect to the seller and other purchasers. With the resultant fall of the price he was able to buy such a book and later he stuck the missing leaves in their places. Furthermore Ibn al-Khashshâb never returned a borrowed book to its owner alleging with sorrow that it could not be withdrawn from his library. However he bequeathed all his books to seekers of knowledge. <sup>1</sup>

#### 4. *The Library of al-Muwaffaq b. Matrân ( d. 587 A.H. )*

Al-Muwaffaq, the medical scholar, was a great book lover. In his library he left about 10,000 volumes. To enrich this collection he had copied books himself, being a notable calligrapher, and, in addition, employed three scribes for the same purpose. Most of the books he possessed were corrected and revised by himself with useful marginal comments inserted. <sup>2</sup>

#### 5. *The Library of Jamâl al-Dîn al-Qifî ( d. 646 A.H. )*

Al-Qifî, the Vazîr of the Ayyûbid dynasty in Syria, was an authority on different sciences. He was such a great book lover that authors and book owners travelled to him from great distances to present him with new works and rare manuscripts in order to receive his liberal remuneration in return. Books were his chief interest; to them he devoted so much energy that he refused to marry. His library, thus, is reported to have been worth 50,000 dinârs. In accordance with his will the books after his death, were given to al-Nâsir the ruler of Halab. <sup>3</sup>

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(1) Yâqût, IV, pp. 286—287.

(2) Ibn Abî Usaibi'ah, II, p. 178, Muhammad Kurd 'Ali, *Khîtat al-Shâm*, VI, p. 193.

(3) Al-Kutbî : *Fawât al-Wafayât*, II, p. 97, *Khîtat al-Shâm*, VI, p. 193, *Islamic Culture*, III : 1929, p. 217.



6. *The Library of al-Mubashshir b. Fâtik (d. about the end of the 5th C. )*

The medical scholar, Ibn Fâtik, possessed one of the most marvellous collections of books. His great library was his beloved resort in which he used to spend his time. His wife is reported to have been very jealous of books which attracted her husband in his spare time. Thus after his death his wife threw the collection into the ornamental basin inside the house while she was lamenting him. The books were saved a little later but this accident spoilt a great deal of the collection and for the most part changed the colour of the paper. <sup>1</sup>

7. *The Library of Ifrâ'im b. al-Zaffân ( about 500 A.H. )*

Ifrâ'im was one of the best students of 'Alî b. Ridwân. He had a number of Khazâ'in for books mostly on medicine. Ifrâ'im for a certain reason agreed to sell 10,000 volumes of his collection and the purchaser happened to be 'Iraqi citizen. Having heard this news al-Malik al-Afdal decided to pay the price to Ifrâ'im and to have the books in order that Egyptians should make use of them. The books were, accordingly transferred to al-Afdal's library, but in addition to this number twice as many again remained. <sup>2</sup>

8. *The Library of 'Imâd al-Dîn al-Isfahânî*

Having heard of the low prices at which the valuable Fâtimîd books were estimated 'Imâd al-Dîn al-Isfahânî hurried to the spot and took part in the auctions. The wonderful collections he chose for himself cost some hundreds of dinârs but Saladin did not let him pay anything and made him a present of them. Shortly afterwards Saladin bestowed another set of books on 'Imâd al-Dîn, selected from the Palace Library. A third gift of books is described by 'Imâd al-Dîn as follows : (On

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(1) Ibn Abî Usaibi'ah, II, pp, 98—99, al-Qifli, p. 269.

(2) Ibn Abî Usaibi'ah, II, p. 105.

a certain day I entered the Sultan's presence while a selection of books was lying before him. I was invited to look at them and on being told that some of them were works for which I was searching I replied: « All these books are equally useful to me. » The whole number, then, was given to me.) <sup>1</sup>

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(1) Abû Shâmah : *al-Rawdatain*, I, p. 268.

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1. In the Middle Ages, among the learned classes, there was no distinction between teachers and non-teachers. Every learned man was busied in some sort of teaching, either formally or informally, sometimes by verbal instruction and in some cases by publishing books. So it will not be out of place to include in this work facts about learned men who did not occupy professional teaching posts.

### **The importance of teachers**

2. Receiving one's education from the scholars of the time and not through books alone was considered an essential for the student. Some Muslims held it to be a calamity to replace the professor with paper; <sup>1</sup> others went so far as to regard the professorless seeker of knowledge as a Godless man or one led by the Devil. <sup>2</sup>

This idea of the necessity of the professor was expressed by Mus'ab b. al-Zubair, al-Imâm al-Shâfi'i and the Ikhwân al-Safâ as follows:

«People speak the best of what they have learnt, learn the best of what they have written and write the best of what they have heard, therefore, if you are seeking knowledge, take it from the man's lips and thus you will receive selected learning.» ( Mus'ab). <sup>3</sup>

«Whoever learns from books will miss the required achievement» ( al-Shâfi'i). <sup>4</sup>

«It is beyond the ability of each person to acquire knowledge by his own efforts; thus the student needs a teacher and guide for learning, character, belief and actions» ( Ikhwân

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(1) Ibn Jumâ'ah : *Tadhkirat al-Sâmi' wa al-Mutakallim*, p. 87.

(2) Unknown author of a work called : *al-Shakwâ* : See *Journal Asiatique*, 1940, pp. 284—285.

(3) *Muhâdarât al-Abrâr* attributed to Muhyî al-Dîn b. al-'Arabî, MS. Istanbul, 3 B.

(4) Ibn Jumâ'ah : *Tadhkirat al-Sâmi'*, p. 87.



al-Safâ). 1

Seeing that professors are necessary in the educational process, the choice must clearly fall on men of wide learning who are in the closest contact with colleagues of the highest integrity. 2

### The Relations Between Governments and Teachers

With the coming of Islam the Prophet began to explain the principles of the new religion to his followers.<sup>3</sup> He did that not as a political but as a religious leader. After his death the Companions, especially the Caliphs, were consulted in the same way. When the Caliphs became mere political chiefs and not religiously well qualified, the task of teaching Muslims was transferred to the learned class. Another reason made this transference necessary even in early times. This reason was the spread of Islam and the need of the newly converted people in the different territories to learn the new faith, a need which the leader alone could not satisfy. Scholars and theologians, then, were sent and encouraged to go, to the recently conquered places to teach there. When, for instance, the prophet returned from Mecca, after its conquest, Ma'âdh was left there to instruct the converts. 'Abd Allâh b. Mas'ûd was sent by 'Umar to al-Kûfâ. Abû Mûsâ al-Ash'arî to al-Basrâ and al-Rabî' b. Subaih accompanied the army sent by al-Mahdî to India and so on.

This was not, however, an appointment of teachers, as they were considered members of the garrisons, which were, as professor Gibb puts it, not mere headquarters of armies but also centres from which the new religion was propagated.<sup>4</sup>

Many scholars went by their own desire to certain places and taught there for the sake of divine rewards. At

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(1) Rasâ'il Ikhwan al-Safâ, IV, p. 18.

(2) Ibn Jumâ'ah : *Tadhkirat al-Sâmi*", p. 87.

(3) *Sahih al-Bukhârî*, I, p. 47.

(4) *Muhammadanism*, pp. 4-5.

any rate mosques were open for any man of qualification to sit and teach in, and learned men did that out of enthusiasm. Time went on and the scholars continued to fulfil this function without any interference. Taking mosques as centres for their activity and not having been appointed or paid by the government they were able to teach whatever subjects they liked. These conditions have persisted until the present time.

When a certain subject was suggested or a certain institute was founded by the government, teachers would be appointed and paid. This marked the first interference by the government in education. A start was made when *al-Qasas* (narration) was organized by Mu''âwiya to be used in favour of his faction. Mu''âwiya, then, appointed a certain man to sit in the mosque after the dawn prayer and the first evening prayer to read to his audience certain stories, such as the story of 'Uthmân's murder, in order to stir the Syrians' passion against 'Alî. <sup>1</sup>

The *Qasas* began in Egypt as early as 38 A.H. and Tawbah al-Hadramî, Abû Isma'il b. Nu'aim and Abû Rajab b. 'Asim were among the Qussâs there. The salary of the latter was ten Dînars a month. <sup>2</sup>

When Bait al-'Ilm was founded in Baghdâd, translators, librarians, copyists and other learned men were appointed to carry out the work, for which they were generously paid. <sup>3</sup>

Al-Azhar, after having been established as a mosque in 359, was in 378 declared a university (*jâmi'' a*), and in 395, al-Hâkim founded Dâr al-Hikmah. In both institutions theologians and philologists were nominated and in Dâr al-Hikmah physicians and librarians were, also, included in the salaried staff. <sup>4</sup>

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(1) Al-Maqrîzî : *al-Khitat*, II, p. 253.

(2) *Ibid* II, 253—254 : the author does not indicate that the *dinars* were paid monthly, but I understand that, as monthly pay was the custom of the time, as is mentioned repeatedly, even on the same page.

(3) See Ibn al-Nadîm : *al-Fihrist*, 153, 174. See also Ibn Abi Usaibi'ah, *Tabakât al-Atibbâ'*, pp. 186—187.

(4) Al-Maqrîzî : *al-Khitat*, II, pp. 273, 312.

When al-Nizamiyah colleges flourished in the Muslim world a paid teacher was appointed to each college. The chair of the celebrated Nizâmiyyah of Baghdâd was to be occupied by the famous Abû Ishâq al-Shîrâzî but he did not appear on the opening day of the college. Ibn al-Sabbâgh, then, took the post for 20 days during which Nizâm al-Mulk appeased al-Shîrâzî's qualms and persuaded him to take his chair. <sup>1</sup>

Nûr al-Dîn in Syria and Saladin in Egypt and Syria appointed and paid teachers in all the institutes founded by them. Of the numerous names we mention Abû al-Barakât al-Hârithî <sup>2</sup> (d. 562 A.H.), Najm al-Dîn al-Khâbûshânî, <sup>3</sup> (d. 587 A.H.) and Imâd al-Dîn al-Kâtib <sup>4</sup> (d. 597 A. H. ).

Al-Mustansiriyyah which was established by the penultimate Abbasid Caliph al-Mustansir contained four separate law schools one for each of the Orthodox sects of Sunnî with a professor at the head of each. Each professor had seventy five students in his charge to whom he gave instruction gratis. The four professors each received a monthly salary and to each of the three hundred students one gold Dînâr was assigned. <sup>5</sup>

Fortunately we have very interesting documents containing various texts of the appointment of teachers. Reading them we realise the importance of these posts and their occupants in the Muslim world, generation after generation. Here I shall give summaries of three of these texts.

The first text is a document issued by al-Hâkim bi Amr Allâh to indicate the appointment of the Dâ'î al-Du'ât to teach the Fâtimid doctrines, in which al-Hâkim says :

«I instruct the Dâ'î al-Du'ât to propagate the Fatimid doc-

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(1) Ibn al-Athîr : *al-Kâmil*, X, q. 38.

(2) Al-Nu'imî : *Ta'rikh al-Madâris*, I, p. 407.

(3) Al-Suyûtî : *Husn al-Muhâdarah*, I, p. 170.

(4) Al-Nu'imî : *Ta'rikh al-Madâris*, I, p. 408.

(5) Ibn al 'Ibrî, p. 425, and Khuda Bukhsa : *Islamic Civilisation*, 287.

trines and extend its benefits over sincere proselytes. This will nourish their thoughts with the essence of the doctrine, enlighten their minds with its purity and will offer them salvation from the bewilderment of doubts.» al-*Hâkim* went on addressing the *Dâ''i al-Du''ât* « Bind the Proselytes with a solemn oath, tell them the sacred doctrine provided that they are of good character and sincere faith, encourage them to abide by their oath. Do not reveal your sacred lore except to trustworthy followers and select for your sowing the most fertile soil.» <sup>1</sup>

In the second text Sultan Sinjar al-Saljâqî the son of Malikshâh begins with a long introduction in which he speaks about the great minister Nizâm al-Mulk and his benefactions to learning. Then he proceeds to describe al-Nizâmiyyah of Nishâpûr and the part played by its previous professors for the promotion of knowledge. He goes on to the appointment of Muhammad b.Yahya al-Nishâbûrî as follows :

«As our present time is adorned by this great man, M. Ibn Y. al-Nishâbûrî, may God prolong his life, and as he is the leader of the famous Shâfi''î and Hanafî theologians, we therefore, gave him the post of teaching in al-Nizâmiyyah of Nishâpûr. He is also trusted to look after the school, its endowments and everything connected with it.» <sup>2</sup>

The third text is for the appointment of Tâj al-Dîn al-Subkî, the author of *Tabaqât al-Shâfi''iyyah al-Kubrâ*, which can be abridged as follows :

As Tâj al-Dîn al-Subkî is the brightest star of all, he was deservedly appointed to teach in al-Madrasah al-Taqauiyyah. He should take up his work with his conspicuous energy and sincerity in order to realise our hopes and desires. <sup>3</sup>

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(1) See the complete text in al-Qalqashandî : *Subh al-A''shâ*, X, pp. 434—439.

(2) See the complete text in *Yâdgâr*, Persian Periodical issued in Jan. and Feb. 1945, pp. 41—43.

(3) The text is in *al-Tadhkirah al-Salâhiyyah* of al-Safadî, MS. in private possession, which Professor Arberry kindly showed me, leaves 98—99.



### Teachers' Social Status

In speaking about the teacher's financial position and social status, one must distinguish between the following three classes :

1. Children's teachers (*Mu'allim Kuttâb*).
2. Tutors.
3. Teachers in mosques and schools.

Each class has its own status and consequently we will talk about each in turn :

#### 1. Children's teachers ( *Mu'allim Kuttâb* )

Whenever there is a study of the social status of teachers in general the following sayings appear, which are recorded by al-Jâhiz :

«Seek no advice from teachers, shepherds or those who sit much among women»

«Stupider than a school-master»

«Stupidity is found in tailors, teachers and weavers» <sup>1</sup>

Admittedly al-Jâhiz records these proverbs but he himself in the same work «*al-Bayân wa al-Tabyîn*» and in «*Risâlat al-Mu'allimîn*» <sup>2</sup> gives us useful details about teachers' social status. He indicates clearly that these proverbs can be applied only to children's teachers and not even to all of them.<sup>3</sup> In the light of this fact we will proceed in our discussion :

In many cases the children's teachers were apt to be despised. Let us first recite some interesting anecdotes connected with them :

On a certain occasion a boy was reading from the *Qur'ân* before his teacher. The boy, reaching the verse «The curse shall

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(1) Al-Jâhiz : *al-Bayân wa al-Tabyîn*, I : 140, Hitti, p. 409, *Ency. of religions*, V, p. 201.

(2) MS. some of which is in the British Museum, OR 3138, and the rest in al-Mawsil.

(3) *Al-Bayân wa al-Tabyîn*, I, p. 140.

be upon you» 1 began to repeat it many times addressing his teacher and emphasising the word «you». The teacher became annoyed and said furiously : «The curse shall be upon you and upon your father». The boy, then, said: « What I have in my book is that the curse shall be upon you only, do you want me to say upon you and upon your father as well ». 2

A *Fiqî* was mistakenly reading the verse: « The Romans have been defeated» 3 as follows: « The Turks have been defeated ....». When he was corrected and asked to say the Romans instead of the Turks, he said «It does not matter, both are our enemies.» 4

Another teacher taught one of his pupils verses from the *Qur'ân* which were deliberately not put in order as follows: «And (remember) when Luqmân said to his son when he was exhorting 5 him: O my dear son: tell not your brothers of your vision, lest they plot against you, 6 and I plot against them. So give a respite to the disbelievers. Deal gently with them for a while.» 7 The teacher was asked for the reason of this disorder which was religiously forbidden. In his reply he said that the pupil's father had not paid him his fees regularly and so he did not want the boy to profit by his teaching. 8

The pupils in a certain *Kuttâb* planned to obtain a holiday. They plotted to delude the teacher into believing that he looked ill. Thus when they saw him they expressed to him their sorrow and one by one began to ask what ailed him and to advise him to have a rest. The stupid teacher, who fell into the trap, gave them a holiday and went to bed. 9

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(1) *Sura 15* verse : 35.

(2) *Al-Isfahânî : Muhadarât al-Udabâ'*, I, p. 30.

(3) *Sura 30* verse 2.

(4) *Al-Ibshaihî, al-Mustatraf*, II, p. 215.

(5) 31 : 13.

(6) *Sura 12* verse 5.

(7) *Sura 87* verses 16—17.

(8) *Al-Isfahânî : Muhadarât al-Udabâ'*, I, p. 30.

(9) *Ibn al-Jawzî : Akhbâr al-Hamqâ*, p. 109.

In Sicily, Ibn Hawqal gives us a report upon more foolish elementary teachers. In Palermo alone there were about 300 teachers. The people took advantage of the decree which had been issued to exempt teachers from being recruited and so many ignorant persons escaped to the teaching profession in order to be released from joining the forces and defending their island. <sup>1</sup> Ibn Hawqâl went to say: « Most of them are entirely ignorant and the rest are not qualified enough to undertake teaching work properly. They have character or knowledge and yet they have pretensions. <sup>2</sup> The most shameful thing I have ever seen is five teachers working in one *Kuttâb*. » <sup>3</sup>

We hear that elementary teachers, in some cases, were not considered satisfactory witnesses in the Court. <sup>4</sup> An explanation of this point is given by Ibn 'Abdûn from which it is understood that some of them wanted to benefit by their being the «*Qur'ân* bearers» from whom the truth is always expected. Taking advantage of this idea, they appeared in Court very often and gave evidence as a profession. <sup>5</sup>

Undoubtedly most of these anecdotes are exaggerated or even groundless. But I must admit that there was a foundation upon which the narrators constructed their mocking stories. A number of the elementary teachers occupied this post just because they had learnt the *Qur'ân* without any more knowledge or educational training. Ibn 'Abdûn blames such a group saying that learning the *Qur'ân* does not qualify any one to stand as a teacher. <sup>6</sup> These ignorant elementary teachers brought the reputation of the whole class very low and made the expression *Mu'allim Sibyân* a proverbial phrase for lowness. When Abû Hayyân al-Tawhîdî was accused of having criticised the treatises

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(1) Ibn Hawqal : *Kitâb Sûrat al-Ard*, I, p. 126.

(2) Ibn Hawqal : *Kitâb Sûrat al-Ard*, I, p. 126.

(3) Ibn Hawqal, p. 123.

(4) Ibn Qutâibah : *Uyûn al-Akhbâr* I, 69, Ibn al-Jawzî : *Akhbâr al-Hamqâ wa al-Mughaffalîn*, p. 108.

(5) *Journal Asiatique* pp. 215–216 year 1931.

(6) *Journal Asiatique* p. 215, year 1934.

of al-Sâhib b. 'Abbâd, the latter threatened him but Abû Hay-yân's reply to this threat was : Al-Sâhib is threatening me as if I had attacked the *Qur'ân* or alleged that his father was «*Mu'allim Sibyân*». <sup>1</sup>

At any rate we must not be influenced by this unjust reputation attached to the whole body of the elementary teachers. To this class belongs a great number of learned men, theologians, philologists, calligraphists and men of letters, and a considerable number of them later became judges, politicians, commanders, poets and even ministers. <sup>2</sup> Of the great number al-Jâhiz mentions al-Kumait b. Zaid, 'Abd al-Hamîd al-Kâtib, Qais b. Sa'd, 'Arâ' b. Rabâh, Husain al-Mu'allim, Abû Sa'id al-Mu'allim and al-Hajjâj. Al-Jâhiz adds that the two elementary teachers, Abû al-Wazîr and Abû 'Adnân of al-Basrah were unequalled in their knowledge and eloquence. <sup>3</sup>

We close this discussion by citing the views given by Goldziher, Mez and Lammens about the reasons which caused disrespect for the elementary teachers. «It is possible, of course,» says Goldziher, «that this depreciation of the indispensable profession of teacher may be due simply to the haughtiness of the Arabic race. In passing judgment upon it, however, we must not forget that analogous features appears in the educational annals of Greece and Rome.» <sup>4</sup>

It is very likely that the low status of teachers may have had its origin from Greek comedies in which the pedagogue was always a comic person. <sup>5</sup>

As the *Mawâlî* and Christians formed the great majority of elementary teachers at the beginning of Islam, the profession

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(1) Yâqût : *Mu'jam al-Udabâ'*, V, 397.

(2) *Risâlat al-Mu'allimin*, MS. leaf 10 A, B

(3) Al-Jâhiz : *al Bayân wa al-Tabyîn*, I. pp. 140, 141.

(4) Goldziher : *Encyclopaedia of Religions*, V, p. 202.

(5) Mez : *Die Renaissance Des Islams*, Arabic translation, I, p. 307.



seems to have been affected by Muslim opinion of these two classes. <sup>1</sup>

## 2. *Tutors*

The story which claims that "Abd Allâh b. al-Muqaffa" declined to give weekly lessons to the son of Ismâ'il b. "Alî with the remark, «do you really want my name to be included in the list of fools ?» <sup>2</sup> shows that even teaching young princes and sons of dignitaries was affected by the stigma with which elementary teachers were branded. The effect, however, was extremely slight and even "Abd Allâh b. al-Muqaffa" is reported to have accepted this tutorship. <sup>3</sup>

We can say unhesitatingly that the post of preceptor was regarded as conferring great moral prestige. The tutor employed by a family of repute was considered as a member of that family. The intimacy, sometimes, went so far that the tutor adopted the name of the family.

Muhammad b. Yahya, who supervised the son of Yazîd b. Mansûr was called al-Yazîdî after him,<sup>4</sup> and al-Kisâ'î expressed this relation in a verse written to al-Rashîd in which he says : «What do you intend to do for a man who has become a relative of yours ? ». <sup>5</sup>

Al-Jâhiz speaks about the tutors of the heirs apparent to the Caliphate and dignitaries' sons saying that no one can assail the reputation of al-Kisâ'î, Qutrub and the like.<sup>6</sup>

The Caliphs and dignitaries paid much attention to the tutors of their sons and greatly raised their social status. "Alî b. Hasan al-Ahmar, for example, had been a soldier in the body-guard of the Caliph's palace and his home was a single room

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(1) Lammens : *Mu'awiyah*, p. 361.

(2) *Muhâdarât al-Udabâ'*, I, p. 29.

(3) Al-Jâhiz : *al-Bayân* I, p. 141.

(4) Ibn al-Anbârî : *Tabaqât al-Udabâ'*, pp. 103, 104.

(5) Ibn Khallikân, I, p. 469.

(6) *Al-Bayân*, I, p. 140.

with poor furniture. Muhammad b. al-Jahm describes al-Ahmar's life after he was chosen a tutor to al-Rashîd's son as follows: « Whenever we go to al-Ahmar we are met by a number of servants who lead us through the palace which resembles kings' palaces and there al-Ahmar comes to us wearing regal clothing.» <sup>1</sup>

The following is a list of some of the most learned men of their times. They were chosen to supervise this class of pupils, and in giving the list we need not comment upon it as the names are well known in Muslim history and literature. These names remind the reader of the high position occupied by the tutors and the political part played by many of them.

The Tutor	The Pupil	Reference
Al-Dahhāk ibn Muzāhim "Amir al-Sha"bī Al-Zuhri : Muh. b. Muslim	"Abd al-Malik b. Marwan's sons Hishām's son	Brockelmann S I, 235 <i>Tadhkirat al-Sāmi</i> wa al-Mutakallim p. 17 — Brockel. GI, 65. SI, 102. <i>Al-Aghāni</i> VI p. 134
"Abd al-Samad b. "Abd al-A"lā. Yazīd b. Musāhiq al-Sulami	al-Walid II «	Brockel. GI 190 S 1332
Al-Ja'd b. Adham Al-Mufaddal al-Dabbī Sharqī b. al-Qutami	Marwān b. Muhammad Al-Mahdī	<i>Duhā al-Islam</i> II p. 51. <i>Tabaqāt al-Udabā'</i> ( Ibn al-Anbārī ) p. 67 Brockel. GI 29, 116, SI: 36, 38, 176. "Asr al-Ma'mūn A.F. Rifā'i I, p. 174. Brockel. GI, 151 SI, 233.
"Abd Allāh b. al-Muqaffa" Yahyā al-Barmakī Al-Kisā'i	Ismā'il b. "Alī's sons Al-Rashīd «	Ibn Khallikān II 361. Brockel. SI, 429. <i>Tabaqāt al-Udabā'</i> , pp. 87, 91. Brockel, GI, 115 SI 177.
Abū "Iyād	Ibrāhim b. al-Mahdī's son and al-Ma'mūn	<i>Al-Aghāni</i> V, p. 127

(1) Yâqût : *Mu'jam al-Udabā'*, V, p. 110.

The Tutor	The Pupil	Reference
Al-Kisâ'i Al-Ahmar	Al-Amîn «	Ibn Khallikân I, p. 469 Yâqût : <i>Mu'jam al-Udabâ'</i> , V p. 110
Al-Yazîdî «	Yazîd b. Mansûr's son Al-Ma'mûn «      «      «      «      «	<i>Tabaqât al-Udabâ'</i> , p. 104
Muhammad b. Hasan Al-Farrâ'	Al-Ma'mûn's son	<i>Tabaqât al-Udabâ'</i> , p. 130
Qutrub	Al-Qâsim b. 'Isâ (Abû Dulaf)'s son	Brockel. GI, 102. SI, 131
Al-Husain b. Qutrub	Al-Mutawakkil's sons	Al-Fihrist p. 78
Ibn al-Sikkî	Tâhir's sons	Al-Fihrist 108
Ahmad b. Sa'id al-Di- mashqî	Ibn al-Mu'tazz	Ibn Khallikân II : 459
Abu al-'Umaithal ('Abd Allâh b. Khulaid Tha'lab	'Abd Allâh b. Tâhir's son Ibn al-Mu'tazz Tâhir b. Muh. b. Tâhir	Al-Fihrist p. 72
Al-Mubarrad	Ibn al-Mu'tazz	Ibn al-Anbârî p. 301
Al-Balâdhurî	'Abd Allâh b. al-Mu'- tazz	Brockel. GI, 25, 104. SI, 15 168 <i>Futûh al-Buldân</i> p. 12
Al-Kindî	Al-Mu'tadî	Brockel. GI, 141. SI, 216
Al-Zajjâj	Al-Mu'tadî's sons. 'Abd Allâh b. Sulaimân b. Wahb's son	Brockel. GI, 209. SI, 372 Brockel. GI, 110, SI 170, 507
Al-Sûlî	Al-Râdî	Ibn Khallikân I, 16 <i>Al-Fihrist</i> p. 215 Brockel. GI 143. SI, 117, 1 125, 130, 136, 218
Kâfûr	Al-Ikhshîd's sons	Ibn Khallikân I, p. 614
'Alî b. Mansûr al-Hala- bî	Husain b. Jawhar's sons	Yâqût (ed. Refâ'i) XV, pp. 83—84.
'Alî b. Ja'far	The grandson of Badr al-Jamâlî	<i>Ibid.</i> XII p. 279
Abû Sa'id al-Bandahî	Saladin's sons	<i>Khitat al-Shâm</i> VI p. 192

### 3. Teachers of Advanced Subjects

With the exception of the attack launched by Ibn Shahîd upon this class, they were universally respected. The attack, however, was not just, as it was a counter measure against the contempt with which teachers belittled men of letters before leading political figures. <sup>1</sup>

Arabic literature preserves a great number of texts which prove the high social status enjoyed by teachers and scholars. This will be clear from the following examples :

A brief treatise was submitted to Hârûn al-Rachîd to guide him in his position as Caliph of the Muslim Empire. It concerns us here to quote one or two lines connected with our topic:

«Learn that» the advice reads, «the position of scholars in your kingdom is similar to the position of a shining light and of hanging lamps in a dark place. The light given by these, depends upon the attention paid to them». <sup>2</sup>

To a certain great Caliph the following question was put: «God gave you the best position in the Islamic world; do you still covet anything?» The Caliph replied: «Yes, there is a position which surpasses all that I have acquired and to the status of which there is no equal; this is to sit in a learned man's place to teach people and give them benefit.» <sup>3</sup>

Abû al-Aswad al-Dû'alî is reported to have said : «Nothing is as valuable as learning: kings govern people and scholars govern kings.» <sup>4</sup>

A Khârijite was pushed into the presence of "Abd al-Malik b. Marwân to be executed. Shortly before this punishment was to be carried out, a young son of the Caliph entered crying and weeping. The Caliph gave the boy his full attention and tried

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(1) Ibn Shahîd : *al-Dhakhirah*, I, p, 118. See Zaki Mubâarak, *al-Nathr al-Fannî*, II, pp. 49—50.

(2) *Advice to Hârûn* 37 B. MS. in Istanbul.

(3) *Mu"jam Ibn Hajar*, 8 B. MS. Egypt.

(4) Ibn Jumâ"ah *Tadhkirat al-Sâmi*", p. 10.



to soothe him. The Khârijite, then, said : «O"Abd al-Malik let the boy cry ; this will strengthen his sight, weaken his voice and move his heart whensoever he remembers his sins». "Abd al-Malik said in astonishment: « You should have been pre-occupied with your own plight. » In his reply the Khârijite said : «Nothing should prevent a Muslim from giving sincere advice». "Abd al-Malik, thereupon, released him with admiration. <sup>1</sup>

Sa'id Ibn al-Musayyab ( d. about the end of 1st century) refused to give his daughter in marriage to al-Walid b. "Abd al-Malik. <sup>2</sup> Shortly after that one of his students called Abû Wadâ'ah failed to appear in the circle for some days. When Abû Wadâ'ah rejoined the circle Abû Sa'id asked him why he had been absent, and the student replied that the death of his wife was the reason. Abû Sa'id consoled him and asked if he were going to remarry but the answer was : « How can I while all I have is two or three *Dirhams* ? » Abû Sa'id, then gave his above-mentioned daughter to this poor student solely on account of his knowledge. <sup>3</sup>

When al-Hasan al-Basrî died ( 110 A.H.) all the people of al-Basrah followed his funeral so that, for the first time in the history of Islam, no one stayed in the mosque for the afternoon prayer. <sup>4</sup>

A son of the Caliph al-Mahdî, while sitting indecorously in the circle of Shuraik, asked him a certain question twice but he was ignored both times although other students were being given full consideration. The prince, then, said: « Do you disregard the Caliph's sons » ? He had this reply : «It is our duty to keep up the standard of knowledge and not to pay attention to any discourteous student.» <sup>5</sup>

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(1) Al-Jâhiz : *al-Bayân*, I, p. 144, al-Mubarrad : *al-Kâmil*, p. 573, and Ibn Qutaibah. "Uyûn al-Akhbâr, II, p. 116.

(2) That was during the reign of his father.

(3) Ibn Khallikân, I, pp. 291—292.

(4) *Ibid.* p. 181.

(5) *Tadhkirat al-Samî" wa al-Mutakallim*, pp. 88—89.

Al-Shâfi''î was advised to join al-Imâm Mâlik in al-Medina to learn jurisprudence, and the governor of Mecca, being a relation to al-Shâfi ''î, sent to the governor of al-Medina asking him to introduce al-Shâfi''î to Mâlik. The governor said to al-Shâfi''î when he received him: « O my boy, I prefer to walk with bare feet from al-Medina to Mecca than to go these few steps to Mâlik's house. I feel very humble at his door and it is with little hope of success that I shall go with you.»<sup>1</sup>

Hârûn al-Rashîd, on a certain occasion, passed by Muhammad b. al-Hasan and his audience. All the people rose to greet the Caliph except Muh b al-Hasan. When the Caliph asked him about that, he replied: « I hated to behave as servants do, being as I am a member of the learned class.»<sup>2</sup>

Abû Mu''âwiyah, a blind learned doctor, was one day dining with the Caliph, when someone brought round a basin and ewer, and poured water on his hands, after the Eastern fashion. Abû Mu''âwiyah, being blind, did not perceive who it was that had paid him this attention, until Hârûn al-Rashîd owned that he himself had waited on him. «Oh, Commander of the faithful» exclaimed the *Savant*; «I suppose you do this by way of showing honour to learning!» « Just so» replied the Caliph.<sup>3</sup>

Ahmad b. Dâwûd was the first one to dare to open the conversation in a Caliph's presence. Moreover when al-Afshîn arrested Abû Dulaf al-Qâsim b. ''Isâ and decided to kill him, Ahmad b. Dâwûd hurried to al-Afshîn to inform him that it was the Caliph's order not to do Abû Dulaf any harm. Ibn Dâwûd then, went to al-Mu''tasim and told him that he had delivered a false message in his name but the Caliph supported his initiative, which had procured the man's release.<sup>4</sup>

Al-Mu''tadid was once wandering in his garden holding the

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(1) Yâqût : *Mu''jam al-Udabâ'*, VI, pp. 369—370.

(2) Al-Khatîb al-Baghdâdî : *Târikh Baghdâd*, II, pp. 173—174.

(3) Palmer : *Hârûn al-Rashîd*, p. 32.

(4) Ibn Khallikân, I, p. 31.

hand of Thâbit b. Qurrah. Suddenly the Caliph withdrew his hand. When Thâbit asked what was the matter the answer was «My hand was above yours and a learned man should always be the uppermost.» <sup>1</sup>

In a dispute between the Caliph al-Qâdir and Abû Hâmid Ahmad b. Muhammad al-Isfarâinî, the latter wrote to the Caliph saying « You must remember that you are unable to dismiss me while I can write two or three words which will cause your dismissal.» <sup>2</sup>

A certain misdemeanour was attributed to Qurb al-Dîn al-Shâfi'î in the presence of Nûr al-Dîn. Nûr al-Dîn answered: «If this were true his learning would expiate it.» <sup>3</sup>

When "Alî b. al-Hasan b. "Asâkir died ( 571 A.H.) Salâdîn went to his house, prayed for him and walked in his funeral. <sup>4</sup>

Muhammad b. "Abd Allâh called "Ain al-Dawlah ( d. 639 A.H.) did not accept the evidence given by al-Malik al-Kâmil in a certain case on the ground that the Sultan used to sit and listen to a girl singer. <sup>5</sup>

Al-Malik al-Afdal regularly used to take his books, leave his Royal Palace and go to the humble house of Tâj al-Dîn al-Kindî. The previous lesson might be continued longer than usual and in this case al-Malik al-Afdal would wait until he was called for. <sup>6</sup>

### Teachers' Financial Position

Two questions should be dealt with before proceeding with this study:

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- (1) Yâkût : *Mu'jam al-Udabâ'*, VI, p. 310.
  - (2) Al-Subkî: *Tabaqât al-Shafi'iyah al-Kubrâ*, III, p. 26.
  - (3) Ibn Wâsil : *Mufarrîj al-Khurûb* MS. Cambridge University no. L I. 1. p. 125.
  - (4) Yâqût : *Mu'jam al-Udabâ'*, V, pp. 139—140.
  - (5) Al-Suyûtî : *Husn al-Muhâdarah*, II, p. 109.
  - (6) Dahmân : *al-Maqsurah al-Tâjiyyah*, p. 11.

1. The prophet, the first teacher in Islam, never, of course, thought of any personal gain. His life was financially modest and when he died he left almost nothing. The early Caliphs and Companions, who taught after him, not only declined to make a profit from teaching but even spent their own riches. It is related that they greatly disliked the idea of selling the *Qur'ân* and looked on that as a great sin. They also hated the notion of accepting any recompense for teaching the *Qur'ân*.<sup>1</sup> This attitude seems to have had its effect upon many of the latter jurists, such as *Hanafî* scholars as well as *Aḥmad b. Hanbal*, *Sufyân al-Thawrî* and others, who made it clear that the teacher of the *Qur'ân* and *Hadîth* was not allowed to accept remuneration for his teaching.<sup>2</sup> Many scholars adopted this view eagerly so that when *Nizâm al-Mulk* established *al-Nizâmiyyahs* and endowed them, the learned men of Transoxiana met in council and solemnly deplored that learning was not now to be pursued for its own sake.<sup>3</sup> Under such an influence *al-Hârith b. Muhammad* who was sent by 'Umar II to teach *Hadîth* in *al-Bâdiyah* refused to receive the salary fixed for him.<sup>4</sup> *Abû al-'Abbâs al-Asamm*, the famous *Muhaddith* in *Khurâsân* never accepted any subsidy for his teaching and he used to earn his living as a craftsman which was a common practice.<sup>5</sup> Many other scholars went further as they spent their private wealth for the advancement of learning. It is reported that *Abû Bakr al-Jawzaqî* of *Nîshâbûr* said: « For the sake of *Hadîth* I spent 100 000 Dirhams and I have never gained a single Dirham from it. »<sup>6</sup> When *al-Khaṭîb al-Baghdâdî* was sitting on his private carpet in the mosque of *Sûr* surrounded by his students, an 'Alîd follower entered and put 300 dînârs on the carpet. Al-

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(1) *Ibn Qutaybah* : *Uyûn al-Akḥbâr*, II, p. 131.

(2) The introduction of *Bustân al-'Arifîn* of *al-Samarqandî*.

(3) *Hâjî Khalîfah* : *Kashf al-Zunûn*, I, p. 15, and *Encyclopædia of Education*, III, p. 1113.

(4) *Ibn 'Abd al-Ḥakam* : *Sirat 'Umar b. 'Abd al-'Azîz* p. 167.

(5) *Mez* I, p. 306 from *al-Muntazim* of *Ibn al-Jawzi* MS. 87.

(6) *Al-Subkî* : *Tabaqât al-Shâfi'iyyah al-Kubrâ*, II, p. 169.



Kharib, blushing, took his carpet and departed from the mosque leaving the "Alid picking up his dinârs.<sup>1</sup> Before his death al-Kharib gave his money, which amounted to 200 dinârs to Traditionists and Jurists.<sup>2</sup>

Many teachers other than those of the *Qur'ân* and *Hadith* showed their unwillingness to earn money through the promotion of knowledge. Of this large number we mention a few examples. Al-Khalil b. Ahmad (d. 175 A.H.), who produced the first Arabic dictionary, invented Arabic prosody and gave the notation of Arabic music, lived in bitter poverty and never consented to work for a stipend. He proudly refused to be a tutor of Sulaimân b. "Alî's son.<sup>3</sup> The Court of Sayf al-Dawlah al-Hamdânî was the focus of eminent scholars and men of letters. He coined special dinârs for rewards often given to learned people. In that Court al-Fârâbî (d. 339 A.H.) lived but he refused to accept any grant and was satisfied to take four dirhams daily for the bare necessities of life.<sup>4</sup> The theologian and philologist Abû al-Barakât al-Anbârî (d. 577 A.H.), although very poor, was in the habit of teaching his students gratis.<sup>5</sup>

We do not need to go any further in giving such examples as they abound in many sources, but we need to ask: « Why, then, were salaries introduced? The answer lies, as far as I can see, in the following two facts:

A. The appointment of a man to conduct a course of teaching neither from religious motives nor for the promotion of knowledge, as we have seen in *al-Qasas*. The salary was the only incentive to encourage such a man to perform this duty.

B. From the early times of Islam, Non-Muslims were

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(1) Al-Subkî : *Tabaqât al-Shâfi'iyyah al-Kubrâ*, III, p. 14.

(2) Ibn Khallikân, I, p. 38.

(3) Ibn Khallikân, I, p. 243 and Ibn al-Anbârî : *Tabaqât al-Udabâ'*, p. 57.

(4) Ibn Hajjah al-Hamawî : *Thamarât al-Awraq* in the margin of *al-Mustatraf fi Kul Fann Mustazraf*, I, p. 88.

(5) Abû Shâmah : *al-Rawdatain*, II, p. 27.

employed to teach children reading and writing, and a little later many of them such as Jurjīs b. Mikhâ'il, Yuhannâ b. Mâsawaih, Jibrîl b. Bakhtishû' and Hunain b. Ishâq took a great part in the advancement of learning. They were usually paid for this service.

For these two reasons the idea of receiving salaries in return for teaching and promoting knowledge existed, and in course of time it became a normal procedure. It was welcomed except by unworldly men who continued to follow the example of the Prophet and his Companions.

2. Ibn Khaldûn believes that flattery and submission usually lead to wealth and happiness, while a man of self respect lives mostly in poverty. <sup>1</sup> He thinks, too, that upon the value of the work to the community, depends the magnitude of the recompense. <sup>2</sup> He then comes to the conclusion that as judges, teachers callers to prayer and Imâms (leaders in prayer) do not care to flatter and do not offer the community a service necessary for its existence, their financial position is generally modest. He adds that he has seen documents containing accounts belonging to al-Ma'mûn's financial department which prove his hypothesis. <sup>3</sup>

One may ask what work is necessary in Ibn Khaldûn's view? Does he measure it materially? The answer may be negative as we know that manual and agricultural workers were kept at a very low standard of living. And if we agree with Ibn Khaldûn that *Mu'adhdhins* and Imâms do not contribute things necessary for society, we cannot allege this, in connection with judges and teachers. I believe that Ibn Khaldûn was influenced by classifying judges and teachers together with *Mu'adhdhins* and Imâms in his statement.

Moreover Ibn Khaldûn does not give us any details concern-

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(1) *Al-Muqaddimah*, p. 275.

(2) *Ibid.* p. 276.

(3) *Ibid.* pp. 276—277.

ing the documents he saw while we have facts which seem to oppose his allegation. Al-Kindî reports that the stipend of al-Faḍl b. Ghânim, who was appointed a judge in Egypt in 198 A.H., was 168 dinârs monthly <sup>1</sup>and the salary of 'Isâ b. al-Munkadir, who occupied this post in 212 A.H. was fixed at 7 dinârs a day. <sup>2</sup>

In the following study I shall try to give precise facts in accordance with the plan adopted in the preceding section.

### Children's Teachers

Every record I know concerning the financial position of this class of teachers, indicates that it was at a low level. Being mostly teachers of the *Qur'ân* and religious subjects, they were advised to be content and not to have pecuniary ambition. <sup>3</sup> Further it is believed that their social status, already explained, affected their financial position.

To give some examples of this condition I refer to the verse composed to remind al-Hajjâj of his past as an elementary teacher. It says: Al-Hajjâj should not forget his humble past when he was in charge of some children whom he used to teach *Sûrat al-Kawthar*. He must remember, too, the loaves of different shapes which were sent to him as trifling fees for his services. <sup>4</sup>

Ibn al-Sikkît failed to earn his living by elementary teaching and so he abandoned this occupation and began to learn grammar in order to qualify himself for a better position. <sup>5</sup>

Ibn Hawqal reports that the whole fees of some elementary teachers in Sicily did not amount to 10 dinârs a year. <sup>6</sup>

The fees, however, which were not precisely fixed but depend-

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(1) *Al-Wulâh wa al-Qudâh*, pp, 100—101.

(2) *Ibid.* p. 113.

(3) Al-'Abdarî : *al-Madkhal*, II : 159—160.

(4) Jurjânî : *al-Muntakhab min Kinâyat al-'Udabâ'*, p. 118.

(5) Ibn Khallikân, II, p. 461.

(6) *Kitâb Sûrat al-Ard*, I, p. 127.

ed generally upon the financial position of the boys' parents, can be put under two headings : Fees connected with the time and fees connected with the achievements of the individual boy. The first fees were paid by almost every student and they comprised a trifling sum of money and a loaf of bread to be paid weekly in addition to a small sum of money to be paid on the occasion of various festivals.<sup>1</sup> In some cases an annual portion of corn was paid instead of the weekly money. The second fee was demanded from each individual boy when he finished learning one of certain *Sûras* in the *Qur'ân*.

I have shown that the social status possibly affected the financial position. Now I wish to point out that the opposite was probably true as well.

### Tutors

Tutors, doubtless, enjoyed the wealth and prosperity of the exalted class they served. An appointment to a tutorship usually ensured a man immediate and considerable material promotion, and the settlement of any pecuniary difficulties he might have. Hishâm b. 'Abd al-Malik, although very miserly, is reported to have paid a debt of 7000 *dînârs* on behalf of al-Zuhrî who had just been chosen tutor to Hishâm's son.<sup>2</sup>

We have already referred briefly to a very important statement recorded by Yâqût which clearly illustrates this point, namely the tutor's financial position. Here it is again in full : It was the Caliph's habit to present the preceptor, after the close of the first day, with all the furniture placed in the apartment where he taught his pupil. The beasts of burden carrying the furniture to the tutor's house were included in the present.<sup>3</sup> When al-Ahmar was chosen for the tutorship of al-Amîn, the

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(1) Al-Qâbisî : *al-Fudlah*, 73 B.

(2) Ibn Jumâ'ah : *Tadhkirat al-Sâmi' wa al-Mutakallim*, p. 17 at foot.

(3) Yâqût : *Dictionary of learned men*, V, p. 110.



apartment was elegantly furnished in preparation for the tutor's coming. After the first session an order was given to transfer all this property to al-Ahmar's house but he said that he had only one room in which he lived alone.

Al-Rashid, then, bought a house for him, gave him a concubine, a servant boy and a suitable mount. He assigned him a regular salary to keep him and all his possessions at a luxurious level, which is described by Muhammad b. al-Jahm as follows : «Whenever we go to al-Ahmar, we are met by a number of servants who lead us through the palace which resembles kings' palaces and there al-Ahmar comes to us wearing regal clothing ». <sup>1</sup>

Apart from the regular salary fixed to al-Kisâ'i, al-Rashid gave him, when he was chosen, 10,000 dirhams, a beautiful concubine with all her accessories, <sup>2</sup>a servant and a horse harnessed for riding. <sup>3</sup> And apart from the regular salary fixed to Ibn al-Sikkî, al-Mutawakkil gave him on a certain occasion 50,000 dinârs. We read also of repeated presents, financial help and regular food and accommodation given to most of the tutors.

From the various sources we can deduce that the average salary for a tutor was 1000 dirhams per month. Such a sum of money was given to Ibn al-Sikkî for the tutorship of Ibn Tâhir's son, <sup>4</sup> and to Tha'lab to supervise Muhammad b. 'Abd Allâh's son. <sup>5</sup> A sum of 70 dinârs which equals nearly the 1,000 dirhams was the regular pay for the tutor of the son of a commander in 'Abd Allâh b. Tâhir's army. <sup>5</sup>

### Teachers of Advanced Subjects

In general, scholars and learned men enjoyed a very remarkable financial position. Caliphs, Sultans and dignitaries wil-

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(1) Yâqût : *Mu'jam al-Udabâ'*, V, p. 110

(2) Ibn Khallikân, I, p. 470.

(3) *Ibid.* II, p. 461.

(4) Yâqût : *Mu'jam al-Udabâ'*, II, p. 144.

(5) Mez : *Die Renaissance Des Islams*, I, p. 308.

lingly encouraged learned people and offered them frequent donations. Al-Ma'mûn for instance, was never tired of bestowing gifts on Hunain. <sup>1</sup>

When al-Imâm al-Shâfi'î came to Egypt, he was cordially received by Ibn 'Abd al-Hakam who gave him 1000 dinârs. Three rich friends of Ibn 'Abd al-Hakam imitated him and gave al-Shâfi'î 2000 dinârs more. <sup>2</sup>

Al-Jâhiz was a vendor of bread and fish in Saihân. <sup>3</sup> When he became a famous scholar, his financial position was much advanced. He once went to al-Basrah and returned with such astonishing wealth that Maimûn b. Hârûn asked him whether he had a big estate there. Al-Jâhiz smiled and replied: «I presented my work *«al-Hayawân»* to Muhammad b. 'Abd al-Malik. « *al-Bayân wa al-Tabyîn»* to Ahmad b. Dâwûd and «*al-Zar' wa al-Nahl»* to Ibrâhîm b. 'Abbâs al-Sûlî and from each of them I received 5000 dinârs. I left al-Basrah as if I had there a big estate which, however, does not need cultivation or manure.» <sup>4</sup>

Al-Rabî' b. Sulaimân who taught Traditions in Ahmad b. Tûlûn's mosque received a purse containing 1000 dinârs from Ibn Tûlûn on the first day of his work. <sup>5</sup>

Some scholars were included with Jurists, learned men and companions who used to converse with the ruler and edify him. These scholars were paid for the three functions : al-Zajjâj, being one of them, had a sum of 300 dinârs per month. <sup>6</sup>

Al-Muqtadir assigned 50 dinârs a month for Ibn Duraid when he came to Baghdâd in poverty. <sup>7</sup>

Later, when teachers were appointed, they were regularly

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(1) Khûdâ Bukhsh : *Islamic Civilization*, p. 277.

(2) Ibn Jumâ'ah : *Tadhkirat al-Sâmi' wa al-Mutakallim*, p. 17 at foot.

(3) Yâqût : *Mu'jam al-Udabâ'*, VI, p. 56.

(4) *Ibid.* VI, pp. 75—76.

(5) Al-Suyûtî : *Husn al-Muhâdarah*, II, p. 137.

(6) Ibn al-Nadîm : *al-Fihrist*, p. 90.

(7) Mez : *Die Renaissance Des Islams*, I, p. 303.

paid from the public treasury, or mostly from the endowments assigned to the institutions, as we have already mentioned in the case of the teachers of al-Nizâmiyyahs. About the teachers under the Fatimids we have a very useful record quoted by al-Maqrîzi <sup>1</sup> and al-Qalqashandî <sup>2</sup> in which the salaries of different types of employees are stated. A selection of items from this record will make a comparison between the salaries of teachers and other professional persons possible:

The Minister	5000	dînârs
His son	From 200 to 300	»
<i>Kâtib al-Dîst al-Sharîf</i> (secretary)	150	»
<i>Sâhib al-Bâb</i> (chamberlain)	120	»
<i>Qâdî al-Qudât</i>		
<i>Dâ'î al-Du'âh</i> (Teacher)		
<i>Al-Ustadhûn al-Muhannakûn</i>	(to each of them)	100 dînârs
<i>Sâhib Bait al-Mâl</i> (Director of the financial department)		
<i>Hâmil al-Risâlah</i> (Deputy)		
<i>Sâhib al-Daftar</i> (Registrar)		
<i>Hâmil al-Sayf</i>		
<i>Hâmil al-Rumh</i>	....	.... 70 ....
The Chief of <i>Dîwân al-Nazar</i>		
Private doctor		
The Chief of <i>Dîwân al-Tahqîq</i>	....	.... 50 ....
The Chief of <i>Dîwân al-Majlis</i>	....	.... 40 ....
Preacher of the mosque		
The Caliph's poet	....	From 10 to 20 ....
Less important medical doctors who were to live in the Palace ( For each of them)		10 ....

From the Ayyûbîd time onwards, it is noticeable that teachers' stipends greatly varied as a result of many circum-

(1) *Al-Khitat*, I, pp. 401—402.

(2) *Subh al-A'shâ*, III, pp. 525—526.

stances, such as the endowments allotted to the institution, the position and reputation of the teacher and the generosity and integrity of the political leaders. Here are some examples:

Saladin appointed Najm al-Dîn al-Khabûshânî to teach in al-Madrasah al-Salâhiyyah with the following pay:

- 40 Salâhî dînârs per month for the teaching work.
- 10 Salâhî dînârs per month for looking after the endowments.
- 60 Egyptian pounds of bread daily.
- 2 Waterskins full of Nile water.

Later in 678 A.H. Taqî al-Dîn b. Ruzain held this office but had only half of that pay and after him Taqî al-Dîn b. Daqîq al-"Id occupied the post and his emolument was only a quarter of the original. <sup>1</sup> When al-Sâhib Burhân al-Dîn took this office he was again given the full pay. <sup>2</sup>

Majd al-Dîn Muhammad b. Muhammad al-Jabtî was appointed by Saladin to teach in al-Madrasah al-Suyûfiyyah which was founded for Hanafî Jurisprudence. His salary was 11 dînârs a month. <sup>3</sup>

Scholars who organized private schools to teach advanced subjects enjoyed a good financial position. Al-Zajjâj joined al-Mubarrad to learn grammar and undertook to pay him one dirham daily even if he stopped learning. He fulfilled this promise and sometimes he paid more. <sup>4</sup> Muhammad b. "Alî Mabrâmân ( d. 345 A. H. ) would not give instruction in the *Kitâb* of Sîbawaih under a fee of one hundred dînârs. <sup>5</sup> Muhammad Shams al-Dîn al-Suyûtî charged a dirham for every line of the grammatical poem, *al-Alfiyyah*, which comprises about 1000 lines. <sup>6</sup>

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(1) Al-Suyûtî : *Husn al-Muhâdarah*, II, p. 157.

(2) Al-Maqrîzî : *al-Khitat*, II, pp. 400—401.

(3) *Ibid.* *al-Khitat*, II, p. 365.

(4) Yâqût : *Mu"jam al-Udabâ'*, I : 47—48.

(5) Al-Suyûtî : *Bughyat al-Wu"âh*, p. 74.

(6) *Ibid.* *Bughyat al-Wu"âh*, p. 37.



### **Professors of al-Nizâmiyyah Institutions**

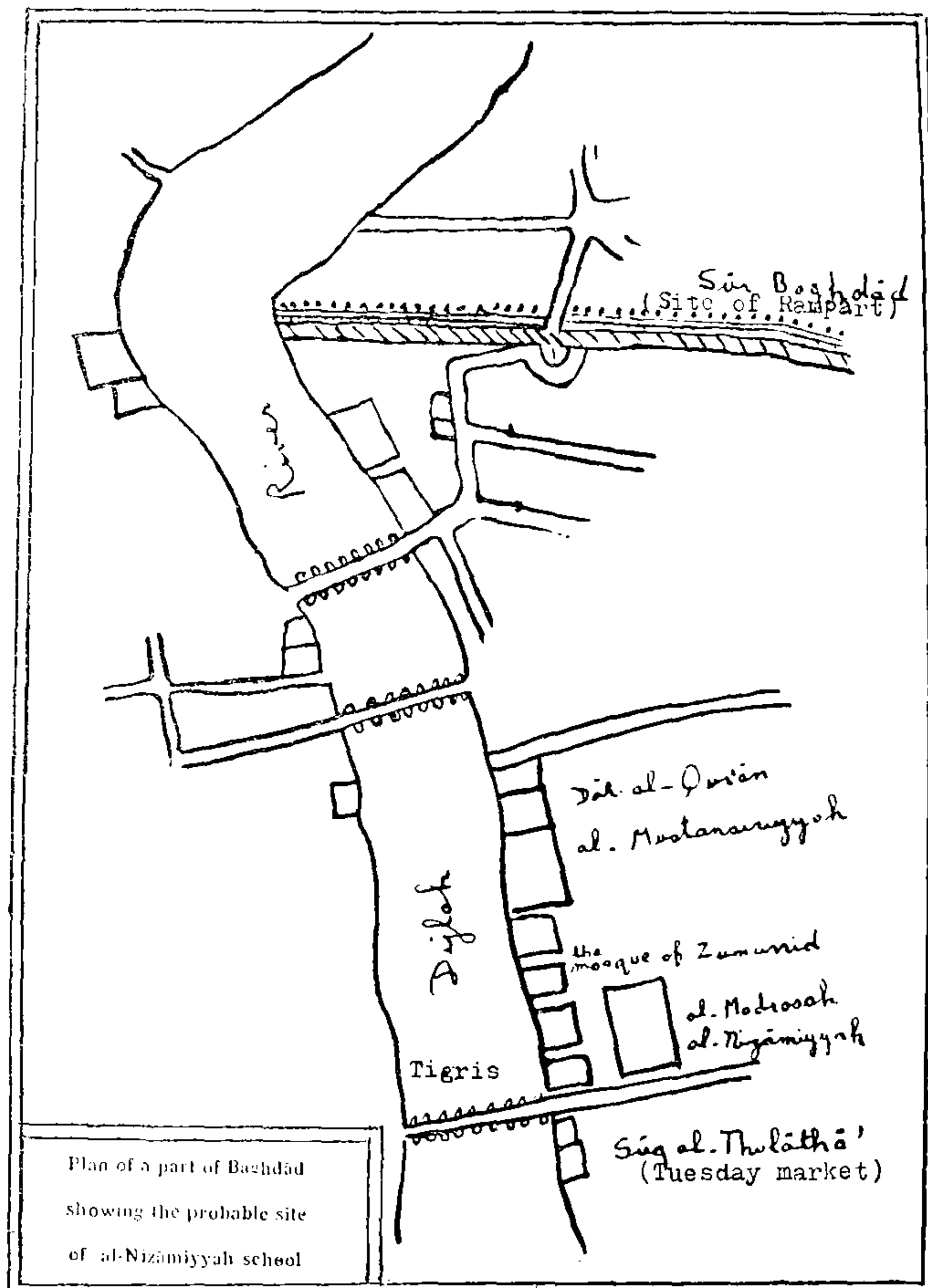
Al-Nizâmiyyah institutions were always of high standard as they were staffed by the best scholars of the time. In the course of my study I made a point of collecting the names of some of those scholars who taught in these schools. These famous names will prove this theory about al-Nizâmiyyah institutions and their standard, and help also in tracing the approximate date of the disappearance of al-Nizâmiyyah institutions, and specially that of Baghdâd the best of all Nizâm al-Mulk's colleges. Here they are in chronological order:

The name	Year of death	Al-Nizâmiyyah of	References
	A.H.		
Abû Ishâq al-Shîrâzî	476	Baghdâd	Ibn Khallikân I : 6
Abû Nasr al-Sabbâgh	477	«	<i>Târîkh al-Saljûq</i> p. 75
Imâm al-Haramain: Abû al-Ma'âlî Yûsuf al-Juwînî	478	Nishâbûr	Ibn Khallikân I : 407
Abû al-Qâsim al-'Alawî al-Dabbûsî	482	Baghdâd	Ibn al-Athîr X : 67
Abû Bakr Muh. b. Thâbit al-Khujandî	483	Isfahân	Ibn al-Athîr X : 251 al-Subkî <i>Tabaqât al-Shâfi'iyyah</i> III p.50
Muh. b. Thâbit al-Shâfi'î	483	«	Sa'id Nafis p. 2
Abû Bakr al-Shâshî	485	Harât	This date is given by al-Subkî : <i>Tabaqât al-Shâfi'iyyâ</i> III 79—80 and in <i>Shadharât al-Dhahab</i> III, 375, but Brockelmann in I : 390 follows Ibn al-Athîr who gives 507 as his year of death.
Muh. b. 'Alî b. Hâmid	495	Harât	Ibn Qâdî Shahbah 165 A. MS. Damascus
Abû 'Abd Allâh al-Tabarî	495	Baghdâd	Ibn al-Athîr X: 123
'Abd al-Rahmân b. Ma'mûn	498	«	Ibn al-Athîr X: 96
Abû Muh. 'Abd al-Wahhâb al-Shîrâzî	500	«	Ibn al-Athîr X p. 123
Abû Zakariyyâ Yahyâ al-Khatîb al-Tabrizî	502	«	Yâqût: <i>Mu'jam al-Udabâ'</i> VII: 287. Ibn Khallikân II : 346
Al-Kayâ al-Hirasî	504	«	<i>Kashf al-Zunûn</i> I : 45
Abû Hâmid al-Ghazâlî	505	Baghdâd and Nishâbûr	Introduction of <i>al-Ihyâ'</i> .
'Alî b. Muh. b. 'Alî al-Fasîhî	516	Baghdâd	Yâqût V p. 415 Ibn Khallikân I : 489
Abû al-Fath b. Burhân	518	«	Al-Subkî : <i>Tabakât</i> IV p. 42
Abû Sa'id al-Bazzâr	520	«	<i>Ibid.</i> V p. 323
Ahmad al-Ghazâlî	520	«	Ibn Khallikân I p. 39
As'ad al-Mayhanî	527	Marw	Al-Subkî : <i>Tabaqât</i> IV : 203

The name	Year of death	Al-Nizamiyyah of	References
Mu'în al-Dîn Sa'id b. al-Kazzâz	A.H. 538	Baghdâd	<i>Al-Rawdatain</i> I p. 185 and <i>Shadharât al-Dhahab</i> IV, 122
Mawhûb b. Ahmad al-Jawâliqî al-Baghdâdî	539	"	<i>Yâqût</i> VII : 198
Muhammad b. Yahya	548	Nishâbûr	<i>Yadjar</i> ( Periodical )
Abû Sa'id Ahmad b. Abî Bakr	551	Isfahân	<i>Ibn al-Athîr</i> XI : 35
Sharaf al-Dîn Yûsuf al-Dimashqî	557	Baghdâd	<i>Ibid.</i> XI : 171
Al-Shaikh Abû al-Najib	563	"	<i>Ibid.</i> XI : 100
Yûsuf al-Dimashqî	563	Khûristân	<i>Ibid.</i> XI : 219
Radi al-Dîn al-Qazwînî	575	Baghdâd	<i>Ibn Jubair</i> 219
Abû al-Barakât al-Anbârî	577	"	<i>Ibn Khallikân</i> I : 394—395
Abû al Khair Isma'il al-Qazwînî	581	"	<i>Ibn al-Athîr</i> XI : 344
Abû Tâlib al-Mubâarak b. al-Mubâarak	585	"	<i>Yâqût</i> : VI p. 230
Muhyî al-Dîn Abû Hâmid	586	Al-Mawsil	Dr. Dâwûd Jalaby : MSS. of al-Mawsil, p. 10
Majd al-Dîn Abû "Ali Yahyâ b. al-Rabî"	606	Baghdâd	<i>Ibn al-Athîr</i> XI : 344
Yahyâ Ibn al-Qâsim	616	"	<i>Yâqût</i> VII : 289
Bahâ'al-Dîn b. Shaddâd	632	"	<i>Hitti</i> p. 411
Najm al-Dîn al-Badhîrâ'î	655	"	<i>Al-Na'imî</i> I : 205
Abû al-Manâqib al-Zinjânî	656	"	<i>Al-Subkî</i> V : 154
Shams al-Dîn al-Kabshî	665	"	<i>Al-"Azzâwî</i> I : 263
Nasîr al-Dîn al-Farûqî	672	"	<i>Ibid.</i> I : 275
Majd al-Dîn b. Ja'far	682	"	" I : 318
Sharaf al-Dîn al-Shahrastânî	691	Mu'id in Baghdâd	<i>Târîkh "Ulamâ Baghdâd</i> p. 3
Muh. b. al-"Aqûlî (about the beginning of the 8th Century )		Baghdâd	<i>Al-"Azzâwî</i> II, p. 226
"Abd Allâh b. Baktâsh ( about the end of the 8th Century )		Baghdâd	<i>Ibid.</i> , II, p. 329
Al-Fairûz abâdî	817	Mu'id with Ibn Baktâsh. Baghdâd	<i>Ibid.</i>







#### Note:

1. After al-Fayrûzabâdî I could not find any mention of al-Nizâmiyyah in all the available sources I was able to see. I believe that al-Nizâmiyyah disappeared at that time (the beginning of the 9th cent.). We have more evidence which may support this hypothesis. At that time the Turkomanian rulers of Baghdâd were engaged in destructive wars against the Egyptians in Syria, the Persians and the Turks in Anatolia. These wars were so severe that many buildings and institutions were completely destroyed. I am convinced that al-Nizâmiyyah was a victim of these disasters. Moreover a financial crisis arose as a result of these wars, and thus the rulers usurped the endowments of the college and took no care to reconstruct the institution. Shortly afterwards the area was included in private possessions and the splendid college came to a regrettable end.
2. Even the position of the building of al-Nizâmiyyah is a disputed question. When I was in Baghdâd for the purpose of research I investigated this matter. With Dr. Mustafâ Jawâd I visited the district and there, with the help of the little literature we have on this subject,<sup>1</sup> and after examining the area and the buildings on it, we came to the conclusion that Sûq al-Khaffâfîn occupies the place on which al-Nizâmiyyah stood. We agreed, too, that the following plan gives the most probable idea of the site in the 7th century.

#### Repeaters «Mu'ids»

Half way between professors and students stands the post of repeater or *Mu'id* <sup>2</sup> He sits with the audience and listens to the lecture given by the professor. When the lecture ends the function of the repeater starts. His duty is to go over the same

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(1) Ibn al-Athîr X : pp. 71, 73, al-Subkî : *Tabaqât al-Shafi'iyyah* III, p. 90.

(2) Ibn Jumâ'ah : *Tadhkirat al-Sâmi' wa al-Mutakallim* p. 150 at foot.

subject again explaining the complicated parts and helping the less-gifted students to understand the topic. <sup>1</sup>

The post existed in the fifth century of the Hijra, and it appeared mostly, in connection with al-Nizâmiyyah institutions and their professors. Abû Shamah reports that Abû al-Fath b. Abi al-Hasan al-Ashturî occupied the post of *Mu'id* in al-Nizâmiyyah. <sup>2</sup> And Ibn al-Athîr states that Abû al-Hasan "Alî b. "Alî b. Sa'âdah who died in 612 A. H. was a *Mu'id* in al-Nizâmiyyah. <sup>3</sup> Abû Ishaq al-Shîrâzî was an outstanding student among the audience of Abu al-Taiyib al-Tabarî. So the latter appointed him a *Mu'id* in his circle. Later al-Shîrâzî was the leading figure of his time. <sup>4</sup> From the Ayyûbîd time, this post seems to have been of remarkable importance. There is a mention of *Mu'id* in most of the schools of that time. In al-Nâsiriyyah, for example, Saladin appointed *Mu'ids* to help Najm al-Dîn al-Khabûshânî in his teaching, <sup>5</sup> and in al-Madrasah al-Sâlihiyyah which was established by al-Sâlih Najm al-Dîn Ayyûb there were four teachers and to each of them two *Mu'ids* were nominated. <sup>6</sup>

Sometimes a man could be a teacher in one school and a *Mu'id* in another in consequence of the different status of the two schools. Al-Nusair b. al-Tabbâkh was a teacher in al-Madrasah al-Qutbiyyah and a *Mu'id* in al-Sâlihiyyah where the famous Ibn 'Abd al-Salâm was the Professor. <sup>7</sup> It was possible, too, for *Mu'ids* alone to perform the work of teaching. The staff of al-Nâsiriyyah consisted, for 30 years, of 10 *Mu'ids* who carried on the work without any professors. <sup>8</sup>

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(1) Al-Subkî : *Mufid al-Ni'am wa Mubid al Niqam*, pp. 154-155.

(2) *Al-Rawdatain*, I, p. 13.

(3) Ibn al-Athîr : *al-Kâmil*, XII, p. 161.

(4) Ibn Khallikân, I, p. 5.

(5) Al-Suyûtî : *Husn al-Mu'addarah* II, p. 157 and al-Maqrîzî : *al-Khitat*, II, p. 400.

(6) Al-Maqrîzî : *al-Khitat* II : 374.

(7) Al-Suyûtî : *Husn al-Mu'addarah* I, p. 194.

(8) *Ibid.* II, p. 157 and al-Maqrîzî II, p. 400.

### The Teacher's Character and Duties \*

Al-Qalqashandî in his work «*Subh al-A'shâ*» devotes a great portion of volume II to the profession of speech and how talks should be arranged and delivered.<sup>1</sup>

The word «teacher» does not appear in this chapter but nevertheless it is clearly understood. The term used by al-Qalqashandî «the maker of speech»<sup>2</sup> certainly includes teachers.

Al-Qalqashandî warns the speaker not to start speaking without preparation, and advises him to arrange the thoughts in his mind and to select the suitable words and thus they will be easy of recall when wanted.<sup>3</sup> His words must be eloquent, easy and smooth,<sup>4</sup> and he must avoid whatever makes his talk obscure.<sup>5</sup>

The same sense, referring explicitly to teachers, occurs in *Minhaj al-Muta'allim*.<sup>6</sup>

We move now to Ibn al-Mukaffa", al-Zarnûjî, Ibn Jumâ'a, al-Ghazâlî and other scholars to sum up the teachers' duties. According to these authorities the teacher should :

1. Be kind to the students and treat them as if they were his own children.<sup>7</sup>
2. Follow the Prophet's example in spreading knowledge without expecting any remuneration for it.<sup>8</sup>

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\* Reference should be made to the work called *Munyat al-Murîd fî Adâb al-Mufîd wa al-Mustafîd* by al-'Amîlî, which is entirely devoted to the teachers' and students' character and duties both in their manners and behaviour during the lesson.

(1) pp. 183—328.

(2) p. 312.

(3) *Ibid.*

(4) p. 313.

(5) *Subh al-A'shâ* Vol. II, p. 316.

(6) 9 B MS. in my private possession.

(7) *Ihyâ' 'Ulûm al-Dîn* Vol. I, p. 46.

(8) *Ibid.*



3. Advise his students as far as he can, and prevent them from trying to obtain a degree before they are worthy of it.<sup>1</sup>
4. Not concentrate upon the students' erudition but also give full attention to their conduct and in case of misdemeanour the student should be gently rebuked.<sup>2</sup>
5. Not revile other teachers' subjects to his students, on the contrary, he should urge them to study as many branches as they can.<sup>3</sup>
6. Choose the simple problems for the beginner,<sup>4</sup> and for those of limited intelligence,<sup>5</sup> and thus he will follow the Prophet's tradition, which says : «He who advises people using a higher style than their standard makes his talk misleading to some of them.»<sup>6</sup>
7. Support his precepts by his practice<sup>7</sup> observing that precepts are comprehended<sup>8</sup> by minds whereas practice is seen by eyes and of course eyes are more numerous than minds.<sup>8</sup> In the same strain, Ibn al-Mukaffa" says : «Whoever wants to set himself up an Imâm must start teaching himself. Thus he will teach by his reputation more usefully than by his tongue.»<sup>9</sup>
8. Encourage the student to use his own sense and judgment and not merely to imitate his teacher.<sup>10</sup>

Al-Ghazâlî in his treatise «*al Adab fi al-Dîn*» mentions a special etiquette for the elementary teacher «*Mu'allim al-Sibiân.*»

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- (1) *Ihyâ' 'Ulûm al-Dîn* Vol. I, p. 46.
  - (2) *Ihyâ'*, I : 47 and Ibn Jumâ"ah pp. 23, 50.
  - (3) *Ihyâ'*, Vol. I, p. 47.
  - (4) *Ta'lim al-Muta'allim Tariq al-Ta'allum* of al Zarnûjî p. 22.
  - (5) *Ihyâ'*, Vol. I, p. 47 Ibn Jumâ"ah 52.
  - (6) *Iljâm al-'Awam 'an 'Ilm al-Kalâm* of al-Ghazâlî p. 33.
  - (7) *Al- 'Abdarî : al-Madkhal* Vol. I, p. 111.
  - (8) *Ihyâ'* Vol. I, p. 48.
  - (9) *Al-Adab al-Saghîr* of Ibn al-Muqaffa" p. 14 from *Rasâil al-Bulaghâ'*.
  - (10) *Kitâb al-Ta'lim wa al-Irshâd* by some unknown mystics, p. 90.

The young pupils are of an age to imitate, and to them, the teacher is an ideal man, «their eyes behold his acts, and their ears listen to his sayings, they will like what he likes and dislike what he dislikes.» <sup>1</sup> Then he must make himself worthy of this ideal position.

Lastly the teacher should treat equally all his pupils, and no distinction should be made between the children of the rich and the children of the poor.<sup>2</sup>

### Certificates

In the early time of Islam certificates were unknown. It was for the student himself to decide whether he was competent enough to hold a new circle in which he would sit as a teacher. But very often a student was prevented from doing so by the discussions and arguments which were expected to take place between a teacher and his students, and in which the teacher ought to prove himself able and proficient. It was stated that Abû Hanîfa, feeling capable, left Hammâd's circle and sat as a teacher, but, when he was asked some questions for which he had no reply, he dissolved his circle and rejoined that of his master. <sup>3</sup> Meanwhile Wâsil Ibn 'A'â' (181 A.H. ) departed from the circle of al-Hasan al-Basrî (110 A.H. 728 A.D.) when the subject of the commission of crime was discussed, then he successfully formed a new circle in which he proved a remarkable thinker. <sup>4</sup>

A little later, and because of the significance of the Prophet's Traditions the *muhaddith* would give a certificate to his

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- (1) P. 43 from *al-Jawâhir al-Ghawâli fî Rasâ'il al-Ghazâlî*. The same is related to have been said by 'Utbah b. Abî Sufyân to the tutor of his son. See *al-Isfahânî : Muhadarât al-Udabâ' : I : 29* and *Ibn Qutaybah : 'Uyûn al-Akhbâr II : 166*.
  - (2) *Al-'Abdarî : 2 : 158*.
  - (3) *Al-Suyûtî : Tab'yid al-Sahifah fî Manâqib Abi Hanîfah. p. 15*.
  - (4) *Ibn Khallikân : Wafayât al-A'yân Vol. II, 252, Yâqût : Dictionary of Learned Men, Vol. VII, p. 224*.

students to enable them to recite Traditions taken through him. This passed afterwards to other subjects, and thus the master would grant a recognised certificate to those students who satisfactorily passed the prescribed course of study under him.<sup>1</sup> The certificate was usually written upon the fly-leaf of the book studied.

The aged and learned Shaikh Aghâ Buzurk of al-Najaf has devoted great activity to collecting and recording the texts of a great number of the available certificates. Thus he is an authority on this subject. I met him in al-Najaf, and, among other points we discussed, was this question. According to him the earliest certificate we possess is dated 304 A.H. and was given by Muhammad b. "Abd Allâh b. Ja"far to Abû "Amir Sa'id b. "Amr and the book concerned is *Qurb al-Isnâd* of al-Himyarî.

*Maqâmât al-Harîrî*, in a MS. preserved in the Dar al-Kutub of Egypt, bears 21 certificates, the first of which is in the handwriting of the author (See Fig. 12). Two more certificates are illustrated here (Fig. 13) and they indicate a continuity of teachers from the author himself.

In another manuscript containing the poetical work of "Umar ibn al-Fârid, "Alî ibn Muhammad ibn Mahfûz al-"Alawî writes the following certificate for his son in 691 A.H. :

«My son, Siddîq ibn "Alî, the learned, righteous and enthusiastic student - may God inspire him to follow the right and true path, and protect him from associating with those who deserve condemnation to torment - has studied this poetical work of "Umar ibn al-Fârid under me except one poem which begins: *Sâ'iq al-Az'an Tatwî al-Bîd Tay*, and so I have certificated him to recite it after me as I do this after Shaikh Fakhr al-Dîn al-"Iraqî». <sup>2</sup>

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(1) Hitti : *History of the Arabs*, p. 409.

(2) The MS. is in the private possession of Professor A.J. Arberry who kindly showed it to me.

ما من شيء يرفع شأنه في الدنيا والآخرة  
 الا ما عمل به من طاعة الله ورسوله  
 مقامات ابن رشد الشريفة  
 انشاء الشيخ الاجل الامام العالم ابي محمد القاسم  
 بن علي بن محمد الجزيري  
 شيخ الشريعة ابي عبد الله محمد بن ابي القاسم  
 شيخنا عن العامة المحبة الذين اثنوا على الشيخ  
 البار ابي احمد بن عبد العزيز بن ابي القاسم  
 وشيخنا ائمة على طه كرمه الله وارضاه له  
 مقامات ابن رشد الشريفة

( Fig. 12 )

Certificate awarded by al - Hariri to al - Mubarak b. Ahmad  
 al - Ansari inscribed in Maqamat al - Hariri





The procedure described above is called *Samâ'* (hearing directly from the professor and receiving a certificate from him). Such a certificate is recognised without dispute. But *al-Ijâzah* (a permit to read a certain book without having heard it from the author or from a licensed professor of it) is the subject of some disagreement. Abû al-'Abbâs al-Walîd b. Bakr, however, in *al-Wijâzah fî Sihhat al-Qawl bi Ahkâm al-Ijâzah*,<sup>1</sup> supports the propriety of this practice.<sup>2</sup> He only puts certain conditions to ensure accuracy in the transference of knowledge and to maintain the standard of learning. «The authorised person,» he says, «must be a trustworthy learned man and the text allowed must be legible and correct.»<sup>3</sup>

According to Sheikh Aghâ Buzurk the earliest *Ijâzah* of this sort is dated 313 A.H. and was given by Muhammad b. Muhammad b. al-Ash'ath to Hârûn b. Musâ al-'Ukbarî.

In later times the certificate granted would cover *Samâ'* and *Ijâzah*. The student who listened to one book would sometimes be given a permit to teach this book and other works which his professor had written or was allowed to teach. Al-Sakhâwî gives such certificate to his student 'Abd al-'Azîz ibn 'Umar ibn Muhammad ibn Fahd in which he says: «I have certificated him to teach this book as well as all my derivative and original works.»<sup>4</sup>

In the Muslim world the gravity of the medical profession was so well realised that from the beginning of the tenth century A.D. physicians had to pass an examination and obtain a certificate without which they would not be allowed to practise this profession.<sup>5</sup>

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(1) MS. in the private possession of 'Abbâs al-'Azzâwî.

(2) *Al-Wijâzah* 41 B, 42 A.

(3) *Ibid.* 30 B, 31 A.

(4) *Al-Dû' al-Lâmi'* Vol. XII, p. 163.

(5) Ibn Abî 'Usaibi'ah : *Tabaqât al-Atibbâ'* Vol. I, p. 222.

## Punishment

«Harshness towards pupils is harmful for them.» Under this title Ibn Khaldûn writes a whole chapter on punishment. In this chapter Ibn Khaldûn explains that «such a treatment by a teacher will drive the child to be a liar and to use cunning to escape punishment. «These bad habits» continues Ibn Khaldûn, «will grow with him and will spoil his life.»<sup>1</sup> But notwithstanding, the principle of punishment was generally accepted in the Muslim world because the function of the teacher was not limited to educational affairs. Indeed, in many cases, parents resorted to the teacher to complain about their child and to ask for him to be punished. Al-Jâhiz tells us that Shuraih al-Qâdî (d. 87 A.H.), had a son who used to neglect prayer and play with dogs, then Shuraih wrote the following verse to his son's teacher:

«He has abandoned prayer and, accompanied by wicked companions, he spends his time playing with dogs. When he comes to you rebuke him and give him the advice of an educated wise man, and if you wish to hit him, use a lash, but after three strokes, stop.»<sup>2</sup>

Ishâq b. Ibrâhîm al-Mawsilî says : «My father was sent to *al-Kuttâb*, and he was not interested in learning, so he was often beaten and imprisoned unsuccessfully, until he escaped to al-Mawsil where he learnt singing».<sup>3</sup>

Abû Nuwâs witnessed the punishment of a boy in the *Kuttâb* of Hafs. In the following verse Abû Nuwâs illustrates this action.

Hafs gave an order that the boy should be beaten because he was stupid and was not attentive during the lesson .. So he was whipped with strap.<sup>4</sup>

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(1) Ibn Khaldûn : *al-Muqaddimah*, p. 399.

(2) *Al-Hayawân* of al-Jâhiz ed. Harûn Vol. II, pp. 84, 85, *al-'Iqd al-Farîd* I : 363 and Ibn Qutaybah : *'Uyûn al-Akhbâr* II : 167. Kamâl al-Dîn 'Umar in his book « *al-Darâri fî al-Dharâri* » p. 38.

(3) *Al-Aghânî*, Cairo Dâr al-Kutub Vol. V, p. 157.

(4) *Diwân Abû Nuwâs* p. 418.

Even princes were to be treated harshly when circumstances demanded. Such an instruction was given by Harûn al-Rashîd to al-Aḥmar, the tutor of his son al-Amîn.<sup>1</sup> Al-Aḥmar said I used to resort to this method whenever I found it necessary.<sup>2</sup>

Ibn Miskawaih, however, advises that gradual stages should be adopted in treating the offending pupil. The first fault should be ignored and, indirect rebuke should follow the second one. If the pupil transgresses again a direct rebuke is demanded. Any further misdemeanour will be met by mild corporal punishment. If the teacher fails in correcting the pupil after following this procedure he is advised to give him respite for a while and then return to the same corrective measures.<sup>3</sup>

Before closing this section we must state three facts :

1. Such a punishment was allowed usually with children over ten years of age at the elementary schools. It was neither allowed with younger pupils nor with grown-up students.<sup>4</sup>
2. *Al-Mu'allim* can resort to this punishment in case of need and he must not use it so often, and in using it, he must not be unkind.<sup>5</sup>
3. The teacher must not hit the child on his head or face but on the thighs and the soles of the feet, as no illness or injury is to be feared from beating the pupil on these parts.<sup>6</sup>

### Rewards and Prizes

In putting this section here I am adopting the policy initiated by some Muslim scholars who used to discuss the question of rewards and prizes together with that of punishment. As

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(1) Ibn Khaldûn : *al-Muqaddimah* 390.

(2) Al-Bayhaqî : *al-Mahâsin wa al-Masâwî*, p. 617.

(3) *Tahdhib al-Akhlâq* p. 20.

(4) Ibn 'Abdûn in *Journal Asiatique* p. 214.

(5) Al-Ghazâlî treatise « *al-Adab fi al-Dîn* » p. 43 in « *al-Jawâhir...* »

(6) Al-Qurashî : *Ma'âlim al-Qurbah* p. 171 and al-Shaizari : *Nihâyat al-Rutbah* p. 101.



the child is punished for his errors, so it is right, in turn, that he be rewarded for good deeds.

Ibn Miskawaih recommends that the child be praised and rewarded for excellent behaviour and good actions.<sup>1</sup> Al-Ghazâlî repeats almost the same words adding that it is to please the boy that rewards must be given to him for his encouragement.<sup>2</sup>

Rewards for students took several forms. Deserving pupils were, sometimes, rewarded by being carried through the streets on camels followed by cheering crowds. Residents in houses on both sides of the streets used to throw almonds and other kinds of nuts to the people in the procession as a mark of greeting. One of these occasions was terminated by an unexpected tragedy when the one-eyed boy "Alî b. Jabalah on the camel lost his sight as a result of being struck in his sound eye by an almond.<sup>3</sup>

In addition to such moral rewards, material prizes were also awarded to competent students, and we find that school founders provide for prizes in their endowment charters.

Al-Malik al-Ashraf, for example, after fixing grants for regular and part-time students in his school, went on to say: «Whoever proves well qualified should be given more and the director of the school has the right to reward any student who learns a book on Traditions.»<sup>4</sup>

The reward proposed by al-Malik al-Mu"azzam "Isâ was very precise. A hundred Dînârs was the Prize for any student who should learn al-Mufasssal of al-Zamakhsharî, and 200 Dînârs to any student who should learn *al-Jâmi" al-Kabîr* and only 30

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(1) *Tahdhîb al-Akhlâq*, p. 20.

(2) *Al-Ihyâ'*, III, p. 58.

(3) *Al-Aghânî*, XVIII : 101, and Dr. Sargaint has kindly instructed me that this custom is still existing in *Hadramawt* as he himself had seen recently.

(4) The endowment document in the private possession of Salâh al-Dîn al-Munajjid of Damascus.

Dînârs to the one who could learn *al-Idâh*. Any of these money rewards could be, according to al-Mu'azzam's will, enhanced by the gift of (*Khil'ah*) a gown.<sup>1</sup>

### Teachers' Garments

Up to the foundation of the Umayyad dynasty the Prophet's garments were the model for Caliphs, dignitaries and learned men. According to Traditions the Prophet's dress was exceedingly simple. It is said that he used to wear *Izâr* (an under garment) which hung down but not touching the ground,<sup>2</sup> drawers, a shirt, and a mantle wrapped about his shoulders.<sup>3</sup> These pieces, with the turban and shoes, usually completed the Prophet's clothing. White was his favourite colour.

Most of the Umayyad Caliphs and chief commanders began to imitate foreign fashions. And later, in the 'Abbasid court, the Persian style was adopted together with Persian titles and ideas. Al-Mansûr was the first to wear the characteristic Persian headgear in which he was naturally followed by his subjects.<sup>4</sup> Wide trousers of Persian origin, shirt, vest and jacket (*quftân*) with an outer mantle (*'abâ'ah* or *jubbah*) completed the wardrobe of a gentleman.<sup>5</sup>

Scholars at first, especially those who had posts under the State, followed the same fashion. But from al-Rashîd's time they took for their model Abû Yûsuf who particularized himself and the learned class in general by wearing a distinctive black turban and *Taylasân* or *Taylas*. From that time learned men had their particular garments.<sup>6</sup> When al-Sâhib b. 'Abbâd

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(1) Al-Nu'imî : *al-Dâris* : I, 584.

(2) *Sahîh al-Bukhârî* VIII, p. 496. ( *Kitâb al-Libâs* ).

(3) *Ibid.* VIII, p. 504.

(4) Hitti : *History of the Arabs* p. 294.

(5) *Ibid.* p. 334, Dozy : *Noms Des Vêtements* pp. 162—163 and *al-Jahshiyârî : Kitâb al-Wuzarâ' wa al-Kuttâb*, p. 210.

(6) See Ibn Sayyidih: *al-Mukhassas* IV, p. 78, Ibn Khallikân II p. 450, *al-Aghânî* V, p. 109, VI, p. 69 and al-Maqdisî: *Ahsan al-Taqâsim* p. 328.

intended to teach Traditions, while he was a minister, he put on the garments proper to learned men before confronting his audience. <sup>1</sup>

With little variation, however, the general features of a learned man's garments were the turban « with a hand-span or more, hanging down at the back » together with a *Taylasân* to place over the turban. <sup>2</sup>

Under the Fatimids « *Dâr al-Kuswah* » provided the various classes of people with all the general and special garments they needed. <sup>3</sup> Green here replaced the black favoured by the "Abbasids, <sup>4</sup> and the usual garments of a learned man consisted of *Qalansuwah*, *Sabnî*, and *Taylasân Dabsî* in addition to the normal clothing. <sup>5</sup>

Al-Qalqashandî gives us useful details about the garments of learned men from the Ayyûbid time onwards. They used to wear very big turbans, an end of which hung down between their shoulders. Sometimes it was so long that it reached the saddle of a rider's mount. Instead of letting the end of the turban hang down, some learned men used to put a fancy *Taylasân* upon their shoulders. Another robe called *Farajîyyah* was sometimes worn by men of the learned profession. <sup>6</sup> It resembles to some extent, the *Jubbah* used now by theologians in Egypt.

The garments of the learned men in Andalusia differed from those in the East. We should agree with al-Maqqarî in his statement which indicates that the Muslims in Spain have imitated their Frankish neighbours in their dress and military weapons. <sup>7</sup> In Valencia, Murcia and the Eastern provinces generally even the *Qâdîs* and *Faqîhs* had abandoned the use of

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(1) Yâqût : *Mu'jam al-Udabâ'* II p. 312.

(2) *Fî al-Libs* MS. by unknown author 49 B Istanbul.

(3) Al-Maqrîzî : *al-Khitat* I pp. 409—413.

(4) Al-'Aynî : *'Iqd al-Jumân* XII p. 192 MS. Egypt.

(5) *Al-Khitat* II p. 270.

(6) *Subh al-A'shâ* IV pp. 41—44.

(7) Al-Maqqarî I, p. 105.

turbans and taken to caps. A contemporary writer, Ibn Sa'id speaks of a distinguished "Allâmah entering bare-headed the presence of the Sultan of Murcia. And, he goes on to say, «Ibn Hûd never wore a turban nor did Ibn al-Ahmar». In the Western districts, like Cordova and Seville, *Qadis and Faqîhs* generally wore turbans, but they were of much smaller dimensions than those in vogue in Asia. <sup>1</sup>

Clean and fitting clothes and a tidy appearance were strongly recommended. It is recorded that the Prophet, seeing a man with untidy hair, remarked that he might have failed to find anything to comb it with. We read too of some scholars who lived in luxury. Al-Imâm Mâlik for example used to wear very fine clothes, sit upon a delicate cushion and eat the most exquisite food. When he was asked about that he replied: « We do it bearing in mind the Quranic verse: « Who has prohibited the embellishment and the good provisions which Allâh has given forth to his servants.» ( 7:32) <sup>2</sup>

### Teachers' Guild

Medieval Muslims, it is recorded, knew the organization called guilds or *Niqâbât*. These guilds were organized for different professions in the Muslim society. Yâqût, for example, speaks about the *Naqîb al-Tâlibiyyîn* who became the supervisor of Dâr al-'Ilm established by Sâbûr b. Ardashîr after the latter's death. <sup>3</sup> Al-Maqrîzî, too, writes about the garments prepared in Khizânat al-Kuswat at the Fatimid time specially for Naqîb al-Ashrâf. <sup>4</sup> The words of 'Abd al-Rahmân b. al-Jawzî run : Al-'Amîd Abû Nasr called for a meeting to take place in al-Nizâmiyyah institution where the text of its endowments was read. Amongst people of high ranks who attended the gathering

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(1) Sayyid Amîr 'Ali : *A Short History of Saracens*, p. 571.

(2) *Kitâb al-Irshâd wa al-Ta'lim*, p. 429.

(3) *Mu'jam al-Udabâ'* VI : p. 359.

(4) *Al-Khitat* : I : p. 411.



were al-Naqibân, al-Ashrâf and Qâdî al-Qudâh. <sup>1</sup>

Thus guilds sprang and widely spread to cover most of the professions in the Islamic world. Teachers then had their guild whose duty was to keep the teachers' community in good standing and to look wisely after the teaching affairs. The teachers' guild worked successfully and had the influence which, in many cases, surpassed the influence of the Caliphs in the educational field. It is stated that al-Kharîb al-Baghdâdî went to al-Qâdî's Palace and there he asked for a permit to meet the Caliph. The Caliph, on hearing this, asked the reason for the meeting suggested, and in his reply al-Kharîb explained that he wanted to be allowed to teach in al-Mansûr's mosque. The Caliph accepted this request, but all he could do was to recommend him to Naqîb al-Nuqabâ' and to ask him to give this permission. <sup>2</sup>

In a certain case mentioned by al-Maqrizî, the caliph appointed a *Faqîh* in a position and the head of the learned men appointed another *Faqîh* to occupy the same post. Then the appointment of the Naqîb was carried out, and the *Faqîh* appointed by the caliph was to be a reserve, only to have the office in case of the occupant's death or absence. <sup>3</sup>

In Egypt under the Fatimids, there were twelve Naqîbs called Nuqabâ' al-Mu'allimîn, and they were headed by the *Naqîb al-Nuqabâ'* who was called *Dâ'î al-Du'ât*. This position could not be filled except by a man of thoroughness and wide knowledge of Ismâ'îlî learning and Jurisprudence, and to this man the educational aspects in the country were entirely left. <sup>4</sup>

Abû Shâmah gives a useful statement from which we deduce that the general Naqîb was to be elected by members of the body and not chosen by the Sultan. Here is the statement:

« When al-Hâfiz al-Murâdî died the filling of his place was disagreeable. Arab scholars were on one side and suggested

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(1) *Al-Muntazim* VIII p. 256.

(2) *Yâqût : Mu'jam al-Udabâ'* I, pp. 246—247.

(3) *Al-Khitat* II, p. 282.

(4) *Ibid.* I, p. 391.

Sharaf al-Din b. Abi "Asrûn for the post and Kurdî theologians were on the other and nominated al-Qurb al-Nisâbûrî for the same position. Trouble and disagreement were about to occur among the class of learned people, and then the Sultan Nûr al-Din had to interfere to put an end to this dispute. He approved the nomination of both Sharaf al-Din and al-Qurb al-Nisâbûrî and put them on the same foot in order that both sides would be satisfied.» <sup>1</sup>

This statement leads us to record that many districts had their own Naqîbs, and the chief of all was that in the capital with the title Naqîb al-Nuqabâ'. <sup>2</sup>

It is an honour for Muslims to have had such organization in medieval times. More details might have reached us about the institution and how it worked if we had not lost a great deal of the Arabic literature in many disasters. Nevertheless the information we have, out of which we give the above mentioned quotations, is quite enough for a general idea on this organization.

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(1) *Al-Rawdatain* I, p. 13.

(2) See Ibn Jubayr and *Husn al-Muhâdarah*, *passim*.



## ISLAM AND EDUCATION

The Muslim student, as will appear in this Chapter, proved extremely ardent and enthusiastic. He, in order to acquire knowledge, endured great hardship and trod a thorny path. No trouble or vexation could stop him from reaching his goal. He was influenced, I believe, by the many verses of the *Qur'ân* as well as Traditions and Sayings which encouraged people to seek knowledge and which exalt the position of a learned man. From each of these three sources I shall give a few examples.

### From the Qur'ân

Allâh will exalt those who believe among you and those who have knowledge, to high degrees. <sup>1</sup>

Are those who know equal with those who know not? <sup>2</sup>

A company of every party should go forth to gain sound knowledge in religion to enable them to teach their people when they come back to them. <sup>3</sup>

( O Muhammad) Pray: My God; increase me in knowledge. <sup>4</sup>

Ask learned people if you do not know. <sup>5</sup>

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(1) *Surah* : 58 verse : 11.

(2) *Surah* : 39 verse : 9 .

(3) *Surah* : 9 verse : 122.

(4) *Surah* : 20 verse : 114.

(5) *Surah* : 16 verse : 43.



### From the Traditions

Learned people are the heirs of prophets. <sup>1</sup>

Learned men and warriors constitute the next class to the prophets. <sup>2</sup>

The ink of students is equivalent to the blood of martyrs on Doomsday. <sup>3</sup>

Valueless is the Muslim who is not a teacher or student. <sup>4</sup>

The ignorant person should, with no delay, seek knowledge, and the erudite man should contribute his learning. <sup>5</sup>

Wisdom and lore give the glorious person more glory, and raise the slave to a king's rank. <sup>6</sup>

Seeking knowledge is as blessed as worship and any trouble in acquiring it is considered a *Jihād*, <sup>7</sup> « holy war ».

Seek knowledge from cradle to grave and search for it even if you are bound to go to China. <sup>8</sup>

Teachers and students are the people and the rest is rabble. <sup>9</sup>

### From the Sayings

“Ali b. Abi Tālib is reported to have advised Kumayyil as follows: « O Kumayyil. Learning is preferable to wealth; you guard wealth while learning guards you, wealth will run short with spending while knowledge will be increased by dispersion ». <sup>10</sup>

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(1) Al-Ghazālī : *al-Ihyā'* I p. 5.

(2) Al-Ghazālī : *al-Ihyā'* I, p. 5.

(3) *Ibid.* and *Subh al-A'shā* II, p. 461.

(4) Al-Isfahānī : *Muhāḍarāt al-ʿUḍabā'* I, p. 25.

(5) Al-Ghazālī : *al-Ihyā'* I, p. 7.

(6) *Ibid.* I, p. 5.

(7) Ḥāfi Khalīfah : *Kashf al-Zunūn* I, p. 13.

(8) *Ibid.* I, p. 32.

(9) *Minhaj al-Muta'allim* 2 B MS. in my private collection.

(10) Al-Ghazālī : *al-Ihyā'* I, 6, *al-'Iqd al-Farid* I, p. 265 and *'Uyūn al-Akhbār* II p. 120.

The following saying is also ascribed to "Alî b. Abî Tâlib: «He dies not who gives his life to learning».

Al-Ahnâf says : « Every glory unsupported by learning will soon vanish and be replaced by humiliation.» <sup>1</sup>

An unknown learned man said: « What has he got who has missed learning ? and what has he missed who has acquired knowledge?» <sup>2</sup>

Al-Khalîl b. Ahmad was asked: «Which is the superior class: scholars or kings?». When he replied: « Scholars», he was asked: «Why then do scholars crowd at kings' doors while kings do not crowd at scholars' doors?» In his answer al-Khâlîl said: «Scholars know their duty towards kings but kings are ignorant of their duty to scholars.» <sup>3</sup>

Ibn 'Abd al Hakam was sitting in the circle of al-Imâm Mâlik when he heard the call for midday prayer. He, then, began to collect his books in order to go and pray. But al-Imâm Mâlik said to him: « O. man, what you are going to do is not better than what you are doing». <sup>4</sup>

Mus'âb b. al-Zubair advised his sons saying : « Acquire knowledge as it will be an ornament if you are rich and a source of wealth if you are poor.» <sup>5</sup>

"Abd Allâh b. al-Mubâarak was asked what he would do if he knew that he would die the following night? He replied: « I should go to study». <sup>6</sup>

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(1) *Mnhâdarât al-Udabâ'* I, p. 16, "*Uyûn al-Akhhâr* II, p. 121, *al-'Iqd al-Farîd* I, p. 201 and *Kashf al-Zunûn* I, p. 13.

(2) *Al-Ihyâ'* I, p. 6.

(3) *Al-'Iqd al-Farîd* I, p. 263, al-Mâwardî : *Adab al-Dunyâ wa al-Dîn* p. 19. It is ascribed in "*Uyûn al-Akhhâr* to Buzurg mihr, See II, p. 122, but here the two classes are Scholars and wealthy men.

(4) Al-Ghazâlî : *al-Ihyâ'* I, p. 7.

(5) *Minhâj al-Mula'allim* 5 B MS.

(6) *Ibid.*

### **Al-Ghazâlî and the Training of Children**

«Parents», says al-Ghazâlî, «are responsible for looking after their children properly. To their hands the innocent child is confided with his pure conscience and stainless soul. His heart, resembling a mirror, is ready to reflect anything put before it and he imitates carefully whatever he watches. He may be an ideal citizen if he is educated well and he may be a harmful person if he is ill-trained or neglected. His parents, relations as well as teachers, will share with him his happiness or suffer from his being evil. So it is the duty of the parents or guardian to pay full attention to the child; teach him good behaviour, edify him and keep him away from bad company.»

«He must be accustomed to rough and hard life and not luxury. Self-respect, modesty and sincerity must be among his outstanding qualities. He should not be encouraged to be fond of money or material things as this is the first step towards useless quarrels.»

«When he is grown up he is due to be handed over to an excellent and good instructor to teach him useful and necessary learning, and to lead him by the right way to the right end. He must teach him the *Qur'ân*, Traditions, improving anecdotes and such poetry as is not erotic.»<sup>1</sup>

### **Equalitarianism in Education**

In the history of Muslim education equalitarianism was fully recognized, and poverty was never a hindrance in the way of gifted students. Before the establishment of schools, every Muslim had free admission to the lectures in the mosque and promising students were greatly helped and encouraged to persevere with their studies. The Prophet's Tradition runs: «Treat equally poor and rich students who sit before you for the acquisition of knowledge.»<sup>2</sup> And al-Ghazâlî is reported to

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(1) Al-Ghazâlî, *al-Ihyâ'* III, p. 57—59.

(2) *Muhâdarât al-Udabâ'* I, p. 20 and al-'Abdarî : *al-Madkhal* II, p. 158.

have said: « The attempt to teach ill-qualified persons is as unjust as to prevent the well-qualified students from learning.» <sup>1</sup>

It was in accordance with this principle that study in mosques was conducted, circles being open and teachers attentive impartially to all. Chiefs and dignitaries, for example, are recorded to have come on horseback to the circle of Muhammad b. Ahmad b. Kaisân ( d. 299 A. H. ) These notable students sat side by side with poor listeners, and Ibn Kaisân paid the same attention to all of them without making the slightest distinction between students sumptuously clad and those in poor and patched garments. <sup>2</sup>

Moreover, teachers were not content to impart their knowledge free but in many cases they actually helped their students financially. The fuller's boy Abû Yûsuf, who later became a companion of Hârûn al-Rashîd and Qâdî al-Qudât of the Muslim Empire, was indebted to his professor, Abû Hanîfah, for financial as well as intellectual assistance, Abû Yûsuf was forced to do the manual work from which he earned his living, but his desire was to attend regularly, Abû Hanîfah's lectures which he often listened to. Under the pressure of his mother, who was in favour of the manual work, he missed the lessons for several successive days. On his return and in answer to a question asked by Abû Hanîfah, Abû Yûsuf explained that his absence had been caused by his financial difficulties. Abû Hanîfah immediately gave him a purse containing 100 Dirhams and from then he bestowed on him countless purses so that he was no longer obliged to be a fuller. <sup>3</sup>

Thus a great number of the poorest class had the opportunity of receiving their education and later they achieved fame and prosperity. Of these we refer to:

Abû Tammâm al-Tâ'î the famous poet who was a humble

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(1) *Al-Ihyâ'* I, p. 47.

(2) *Yâqût : Mu'jam al-U'dabâ'* VI, p. 282.

(3) *Ibn Khallikân* II, p. 451.



water-supplier in the mosque of "Amr. <sup>1</sup>

Al-Jâhiz who was a vendor of bread and fish and became later a prominent scholar. <sup>2</sup>

Al-Shâfi'î who was an orphan and whose mother was so indigent that she was unable to supply him with the necessary paper and pens. <sup>3</sup>

When schools were established, Nizâm al-Mulk, the first founder, declared that education was entirely free, and moreover he assigned regular stipends for students. <sup>4</sup>

Al-Ghazâlî and his brother Ahmad were left in the charge of a certain mystic according to their father's will. The mystic was not financially able to supply their needs. So he advised them to enter a school where they would receive education and be provided for. They did so and thus advanced on the road to fame. <sup>5</sup>

Nûr al-Dîn, in the schools he had founded, followed in the track of Nizâm al-Mulk in making education free and supporting the students. <sup>6</sup>

Concerning Egypt let us quote Stanley Lane Poole speaking about al-Azhar. He says: « Here to this day multitudes of students gather from all parts of the Muslim world from the Gold Coast to the Malay States, each nation to the special *Riwâq* or portico assigned to its use, and here they receive from learned Shaikhs instruction in the various branches of the curriculum..... Students not only pay no fees but receive rations of food from certain bequests. It is a notable example of free education open to the poorest, no matter what his race or language and given

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(1) Ibn Khallikân, I, p. 172.

(2) Yâqût : *Mu'jam al-Udabâ'* VI, p. 369.

(3) *Ibid.* pp. 56—80.

(4) Al-Subkî : *Tabaqât al-Shu'f'iyyah al-Kubrâ* III p. 137.

(5) The introduction of *al-Ihyâ'* I, p. 2.

(6) Al-Nu'imî : *Târîkh al-Madâris* I, p. 160.

to all without any distinction of class.»<sup>1</sup>

Under the Ayyûbîds every student was given lodging and food and was admitted to the circle in which he would learn the subject which interested him.<sup>2</sup> Majd al-Dîn al-Jabtî was appointed by Saladin to teach in al-Madrasah al-Suyûfiyah and to look after its endowments. It was left to him to distribute the whole revenue, after having taken his salary among the students of the school.<sup>3</sup>

Indeed the examples of "Alî b. Ridwân ( d. 460 ) the medical doctor, and Najm al-Dîn al-Khabûshânî ( d. 587 ) the famous jurist, give the impression that poor people greatly benefited and enjoyed the facilities granted to them. From the rich class, on the other hand, one can hardly find any examples who could compete in knowledge and fame with the countless *savants* of poor origin.

Before we close this section we have to indicate that, in addition to free education in upper stages such as mosque circles and schools, free education was guaranteed too in the primary course. It is recorded that numerous *Kuttâbs* were privately founded for poor boys and orphans to insure that gifted boys of that class would be given equal opportunity from their early age. The following are a few examples of these institutes:

In Mesopotamia Yahyâ b. Khâlid made the start when he established a *Kuttâb* for orphans.<sup>4</sup> Later Shams al-Dîn b. Nizâm al-Mulk erected an institute with rich endowments for poor pupils and orphans.<sup>5</sup>

Syria under Nûr al-Dîn had many well-supported schools for indigent pupils.<sup>6</sup>

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(1) Stanley Lane Poole : *Cairo* p. 124.

(2) Ibn Juhair : *al-Rihlah* p. 42.

(3) Al-Maqrîzî : *al-Khitat* II, p. 365.

(4) Al-Juhshayârî : *Kitâb al-Wuzarâ' wa al-Kuttâb* p. 212.

(5) "Imâd al-Dîn al-Isfahânî : *Tarîkh al-Saljûq* pp. 136—137.

(6) Ibn Wâsil : *Mufarrij al-Kurûb fî Akhbâr Banî Ayyûb* MS. Cambridge University L. I. I. 6. pp. 165—166. and p. 7 *al-Durr al-Thamîn fî Sirat Nûr al-Dîn*, photograph 1227 *Tarîkh Egypt*.

In Egypt and Syria, Saladin founded several institutes of that kind. <sup>1</sup>

In Andalusia al-Hâkam II established twenty-seven schools where the children of parents without means received free education. <sup>2</sup>

Most of these establishments were boarding-schools and in all of them, books, clothing and food were supplied to the students.

### Direction and Guidance of Students

As a man chooses bridegrooms for his female relations», al-Isfahânî says, « so the teacher is advised to select students qualified for his particular branch.» <sup>3</sup>

Al-Zarnûjî counsels students not to depend upon themselves in choosing the subject for their study as this matter must be entirely left to the professor whose experience would be of great help in their guidance. <sup>4</sup>

Avicenna reports that a boy, after learning the *Qur'ân* and acquiring the fundamentals of the language, must be educated according to his talents. He should follow the profession for which he is naturally fitted and must not be guided by his own wishes. <sup>5</sup> Avicenna goes on to say: « It is the duty of the teacher then to study the qualities of the student and direct him to the most suitable branch of learning.» <sup>6</sup>

If the student, however, does not prove successful in following this course, it is for his instructor to advise him to join another one which he might master successfully. <sup>7</sup>

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(1) Ibn Jubair : *al-Rihlah* p. 52. and p. 272.

(2) Saiyid Amîr 'Alî : *A short History of the Saracens* p. 515, and Dozy : *Spanish Islam* p. 455.

(3) Al-Isfahânî : *Muhâdarât al-'Udabâ'* I, p. 25.

(4) *Ta'lim al-Mala'allim* p. 13.

(5) *Al-Siyâsah : al-Machriq* 1922 IX, p. 1074.

(6) *Al-Qanûn* p. 27.

(7) Ibn Jumâ'ah : *Tadhkirat al-Sâmi'* p. 57

Yûnus b. *Habîb* started his study by joining the circle of al-Khalîl b. *Ahmad* in which the latter was teaching prosody. Yûnus failed to comprehend the rules of prosody. So al-Khalîl asked him whether he knew the metre of the following line:

إذا لم تستطع شيئاً فدهه وجاوزه الى ما تستطيع

If you are unable to achieve a certain thing leave it and try another within your capacity.» Yûnus, realizing what al-Khalîl meant, left al-Khalîl's circle and learned grammar in which he later became a famous scholar.<sup>1</sup>

Al-Bukhârî at first joined the circle of Muhammad b. al-Hâsan to learn theology, but the latter realized that al-Bukhârî would better succeed in studying Traditions. He gave him this advice and thus al-Bukhârî became the most remarkable Traditionist in the Muslim world.<sup>2</sup>

Hâjî Khalîfah and Abû Yahyâ al-Ansârî advise everyone to gain the general knowledge which enables him to be a good citizen. After obtaining such knowledge, the youth should continue his learning only if he is intellectually qualified for higher studies. In this case he has to follow the branch of learning which suits his mental capacity.<sup>3</sup>

The teacher is instructed to examine the intelligence of the pupil and teach him only what he can absorb. Details beyond the student's ability will be useless and may result in despair and perplexity. Testing the intelligence will be fruitful, too, from another point of view, as according to it students should be classified so that an intelligent pupil would not be taught with a mediocre one as this would be harmful for both.<sup>4</sup>

(1) Al-Isfahânî : *Muhâdarât al-Udabâ'* p. 25.

(2) *Ta'lim al-Muta'allim* by al-Zarnûjî p. 13.

(3) *Kashf al-Zunûn* I, p. 29. and *al-Lu'lu' al-Nazîm fi Rawm al-Ta'lim* p. 5.

(4) *Minhâj al-Muta'allim* 9 A B MS. in my private collection.



### Ages for Study

The Prophet's Tradition which says: « Seek knowledge from cradle to grave », <sup>1</sup> indicates that there was no definite age for Muslim students. It was recommended, as the *Hadith* states, that every Muslim should try to acquire knowledge all through his life. So when Abû'Amr b. al-'Alâ' was asked about the proper age of learning, he replied that a person should learn as long as he lives. <sup>2</sup> It is reported, too, that a person can be considered a learned man only while continuing to learn, but he demonstrates his ignorance if he ceases to do so through self-satisfaction. <sup>3</sup> Finally, it was not excusable for a man sound in body and mind to abandon knowledge, no matter what his age. <sup>4</sup> According to this instruction the companions of the Prophet sat to learn when they were advanced in age, and furthermore, we read about a certain scholar who <sup>5</sup> tried, on his death-bed, to learn the correct answer to a certain question. <sup>5</sup>

However, the earlier one started the better. Ibn Jumâ'ah strongly recommends that the student should begin his education at an early age, as days which pass will not return. <sup>6</sup>

The student in his youth is expected to be absorbed in his work, his health and energy will help him and, as he has no other responsibilities, he will be able to devote all his activity to acquiring knowledge. <sup>7</sup> If he delays his education, many obstacles may arise in his way and his mind will be preoccupied with worldly obligations and duties towards his family and nation. <sup>8</sup>

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(1) *Ilâjî Khalîfah : Kashf al-Zunûn* I p. 13

(2) *Ibn Khallikân* I, p. 551.

(3) *Ibn Qutaibah* II, p. 118.

(4) *Al-Zarnûjî : Ta'lim al-Muta'allim* p. 25.

(5) *Yâqût : Mu'jam al-Udabâ'* VI, p. 309. St 19.

(6) *Tadhkirat al-Sâmi' wa al-Mutakallim* p. 70.

(7) *Tadhkirat al-Sâmi'* p. 131 and *al-Isfahânî : Muhâdarât al-Udabâ'* I : 26.

(8) *Ilâjî Khalîfah : Kashf al-Zunûn* I, p. 28.

Such advice was widely accepted and many parents, in response to this recommendation, sent their children to the elementary schools when they were very young, and boys themselves were often desirous of joining the circle at the earliest possible age so that, when a certain Traditionist decided not to admit young students to his circle, a boy pretended to be an old man by putting a false beard on his face.<sup>1</sup>

It is astonishing, indeed, to read that al-Shâfi'i and Sahl al-Tustarî had finished learning the *Qur'ân* when they were seven years old and the former had conned *al-Muwatta'* when he was ten.<sup>2</sup> By the age of fifteen he was allowed to give legal decisions in outstanding cases.<sup>3</sup>

Avicenna, at the age of ten, had perfectly memorized the *Qur'ân* and mastered many questions of literature, the fundamentals of religion, algebra and Indian arithmetic.<sup>4</sup>

Al-Kindî and Ibn al-'Adîm completed learning the *Qur'ân* and were able to read it in the ten «readings» by the age of ten.<sup>5</sup>

To illustarte the industry and enthusiasm of the Muslim student, we end the section by mentioning that Qatâdah had mastered the whole *Qur'ân* in only seven months.<sup>6</sup>

### Size of Classroom

In this respect mosques differ from schools. Mosques were open and anyone was allowed to join whichever circle he preferred. So the most celebrated teachers had a large number

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(1) Mez : *Die Renaissance des Islams* I, p. 303 quoted from Wüstenfeld Schafüten.

(2) For al-Shâfi'i : See al-Suyûtî : *Husn al-Muhâdarah* I, p. 121 and for al-Tustarî see *al-Ihyâ'* III, p. 59.

(3) Ibn Khallikân I, p. 637.

(4) Ibn Khallikân I, p. 214.

(5) For al-Kindî, see al-Nu'imî I, pp. 483—484. and for Ibn al-'Adîm see Yâqût : *Mu'jam al-Udabâ'* VI, p. 36.

(6) Ibn 'Abd Rabbihi : *al-'Iqd al-Farîd* I, p. 267.

of students while those of less ability or fame had smaller audiences . Abû al-Tayyib al-Sa''lûkî, the famous scholar of Nîshâbûr, had, on the 23rd of al-Muharram 387 A.H., more than 500 students before him.<sup>1</sup> And the audience of Abû Hâmid al-Isfarâ'îni (d. 406), who taught in the mosque of 'Abd Allâh b. al-Mubâarak in Baghdâd, varied from 300 to 700 learners.<sup>2</sup> In Egypt Muhammad al-Na''âlî (d.380) had a very large class in the mosque so that they occupied the area round 17 pillars. <sup>3</sup>

Besides the regular students in the mosque, there were irregular students and visitors who used occasionally to join the audience.

In most of the schools, on the other hand, the numbers were limited. With the appointment of a certain teacher to the school the number of the students was normally determined. Speaking about al-Madrasah al-Nâsiriyyah in al-Qarâfah, al-Maqrizî and al-Suyûtî say that Saladin appointed Najm al-Dîn al-Khabûshânî to teach in it with repeaters and a number of students. <sup>4</sup> Other texts give the precise number of students.

Ibn al-'Ibrî, for example, reports that al Mustansiriyyah contained four separate law-schools, one for each of the Sunnî sects with a professor at its head who had 75 students in his charge. <sup>5</sup> In al-Madrasah al-Majdiyyah al-Khalîliyyah, too, the founder appointed a professor two repeaters and fixed the number of students at 20. <sup>6</sup>

In some cases students flocked even to schools to listen to famous scholars. In al-Madrasah al-Nizâmiyyah of Nîshâbûr, about 300 students formed the circle of Imâm al-Haramain. <sup>7</sup>

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(1) Al-Subkî : *Tabaqât al-Shafi'iyyah al-Kubrâ* III, p. 170.

(2) *Ibid.* III, p. 25.

(3) Al-Suyûtî : *Husn al-Muhâdarah* I, p. 212.

(4) *Al-Khitat* II : 400 and *Husn al-Muhâdarah* II, p. 157.

(5) Ibn al-'Ibrî : *Târikh Mukhtasar al-Duwal* p. 425.

(6) Al-Maqrizî : *al-Khitat* II, p. 460.

(7) Al-Subkî : *Tabaqât al-Shâfi'iyyah al-Kubrâ* II, p. 252.

Any student, however, who failed to find a place in a school could, of course, resort to the mosque which had room for any seeker of knowledge.

### Body and Mind

The close relation of the body to the mind was recognized by the Muslims of the Middle Ages. Even in practising their religion they were advised not to exaggerate or to do what might weaken their physical powers. The man who tried to maintain an unbroken fast in other months than Ramadân and to pray many times during the day was ordered by the Prophet not to do so in a Tradition ending: « Certainly you have a duty towards your body and your eyes.»<sup>1</sup>

This principle was adopted in Muslim educational institutions. Al-Isfahânî asserts that the brain as well as the body needs intervals of pleasure and entertainment. He adds that the exhausted body or mind will not be able to carry on studying, and so any attempt to acquire knowledge under these circumstances will be fruitless.<sup>2</sup>

Once Abû al-Qâsim "Abd Allâh b. Muhammad, a learned man from North Africa, asked Mu"aiqib b. Abî al-Azhar: «What impression have you of the pupils in your *Kuttâbs*?» When the latter replied: « They are very fond of playing», he received this comment from Abû al-Qâsim: « If they were not, charms must be hung upon them.»<sup>3</sup>

In *Kitâb al-Irshâd wa al-Ta'lim* the following statement appears. « Every bodily strengthening will result in mental improvement and will provide the mind as well as the spirit with new power and activity.»<sup>4</sup>

Al-Ghazâlî, too, advised that suitable games should be

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(1) Al-Bukhârî III, p. 489.

(2) *Muhâdarât al-Udabâ'* I, p. 28.

(3) *Al-Mu'allim al-Jadîd* (Iraqî Magazine the 9th year numbers (4,5) p. 25.

(4) See p. 539.



arranged to help the student to recover after his mental endeavour in the classroom. Such a recovery is necessary to refresh his memory and renew his energy so that he will not be disgusted with his work.<sup>1</sup>

Al-'Abdarî also pleads vigorously for games and hours of recreation. He says: « If a pupil is kept from play and forced to work at his task without intermission, his spirit will be depressed, his power of thought and his freshness of mind will be destroyed; he will become sick of study and his life will be overclouded so that he will try all possible shifts to evade his lessons.»<sup>2</sup>

In different ways, however, students' health and bodies were looked after. It was the teacher's duty to notice that their posture was upright and that they did not stoop wrongly while writing their lessons:<sup>3</sup>

The pupils were given their weekly off-days usually Thursday afternoon and Friday. Holidays were also given for various festivals and a longer period during the hot season.

Physical games were organized for bodily training. According to the instruction issued by the Caliph « 'Umar b. al-Khattâb » children were taught to swim, throw darts and ride a horse securely.<sup>4</sup> Running, too, was among the recommended sports for Muslim students.<sup>5</sup>

### **The Student's Character and Duties**

The character and duties of the student are the subject of frequent discussion by many authorities. Here a brief account is abstracted from some of the numerous sources which treated this subject.

The student should:

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- (1) *Al-Ihyâ'* III, p. 59.
  - (2) *Al-Madkhal* III, p. 312.
  - (3) *Kitâb al-Irshâd wa al-Ta'lim* p. 510.
  - (4) *Al-Mubarrad : al-Kâmil* p. 150.
  - (5) *Kitâb al-Irshâd wa al-Ta'lim* p. 540.

1. Be of good character and manners, as such character is usually a basis of pre-eminence. Al-Ghazâlî and al-'Abdarî believe that a student of bad behaviour will never benefit by any knowledge he may possibly acquire. <sup>1</sup>
2. Limit his wordly relations and leave his home and people so that nothing will distract him from increasing his knowledge, and al-Ghazâlî cites the following saying: «Knowledge will not give you of itself unless you give it yourself utterly.»<sup>2</sup>
3. Revere his master and take his advice as the sick person obeys his physician.<sup>3</sup> He should respect his master even more than his parents; as they brought him to the perishable world where as his master's instructions are focussed on the life eternal.<sup>4</sup> In *Minhâj al-Muta'allim* the following statement appears:  
«A person has three fathers : one who begot him, another who fostered him, and a third who educated him, and the last is the best of all.»<sup>5</sup>
4. Have a general idea about every branch of the useful knowledge,<sup>6</sup> from which he should choose a certain branch to study in detail.<sup>7</sup>
5. In seeking knowledge remember the Prophet's saying: «Do not learn for the sake of conceit, or for attracting the attention of the rulers».<sup>8</sup> and not for the vanities of the world either.<sup>9</sup>

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(1) *Ihyâ'* Vol : I : p. 40, & *al-Madkhal* Vol : 2 : p. 98.

(2) *Ihyâ'* p. 41.

(3) *Ibid.* p. 41.

(4) *Ibid.* p. 49.

(5) 12 B MS. in my private collection.

(6) *Tadhkirat al-Sâmi'*, p. 113.

(7) *Al-Ihyâ'* Vol. I, p. 42.

(8) *Ibid.* p. 48, and *Tadhkirat al-Sâmi'* p. 13.

(9) *Al-Zarnûjî : Ta'lim al-Muta'allim Tarîq al-Ta'allum*, p. 7.

6. Try to reach the stage in which he will find in knowledge his entertainment and pleasure.<sup>1</sup>
7. Be patient with his work and with his master and try to earn his kindness.<sup>2</sup>
8. Honour his professor; not to precede him when walking together, nor open the conversation without his permission and lastly to choose suitable times for seeking his advice.<sup>3</sup>
9. When writing anything down, he should do so in a good handwriting, and should leave a margin.<sup>4</sup>
10. Not shrink from obtaining knowledge even from a humble person, as the valuable pearl will not be neglected just because the diver is a lowly man.<sup>5</sup>
11. He must be full of enthusiasm and industry.<sup>6</sup>
12. Not be over-hasty in selecting his professor in the choice of whom character is to be considered as well as knowledge. Famous professors are not necessary as there are useful teachers among those of less fame.<sup>7</sup>

### Relations Among Students

In the words of Imâm al-Shâfi'î «Knowledge among educated and learned people is a close relationship».<sup>8</sup> And in the case of students under one professor, al-Ghazâlî says that as the sons of one father should love each other and co-operate

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- (1) *Al-Adab al-Kabîr* by Ibn al-Muqaffa", from *Rasâ'il al-Bulaghâ'* p. 83.
  - (2) Al-Zarnûjî : *Ta'lim al-Muta'allim Tarîq al-Ta'allum*, p. 10, *Kashf al-Zunûn* I : 29.
  - (3) *Ibid.* p. 12 and al-'Abdarî Vol. 2, p. 128.
  - (4) Al-Zarnûjî : *Ta'lim al-Muta'allim* p. 14.
  - (5) *Al-Adab al-Saghir* by Ibn al-Muqaffa", p. 22 of *Rasâ'il al-Bulaghâ'*.
  - (6) *Kashf al-Zunûn* I, 29.
  - (7) Ibn Jumâ'ah : *Tadhkirat al-Sâmi'* pp. 85—86.
  - (8) *Al-Ihyâ'* I : 39.

with each other, the students of one professor should do likewise. <sup>1</sup>

Hâjî Khalîfa and al-Zarnûjî call the fellow-student «partner» <sup>2</sup> realizing, I believe, that there is mutual interest from this companionship. Al-Zarnûjî advises the student to make friends only with a hard-worker, a righteous man and one of good character. <sup>3</sup>

Finally the student should not be proud if he is distinguished by wealth or dignity, and should not use any authority he may have to influence or offend his associates. He is to be modest to each of his fellows and polite with all his friends. He must be accustomed not to be frigid with other pupils but on the contrary he must learn to ingratiate himself with them and express his thanks to any one who may offer him any kind of help. <sup>4</sup>

### Student's Efforts to Acquire Knowledge

Arabic and Persian literature preserve many interesting anecdotes which show the extreme enthusiasm of Arab students in seeking knowledge. Here we will give a few examples in illustration of this:

1. In the beginning of his book «*al-Hayawân*», Vol. 1, pp. 3 - 12, al-Jâhîz mentions the titles of all his works, one of which is called «*Farq mâ Bayn al-Nabîy wa al-Mutanabbî*». Abû Bakr ibn al-Ikhshâd, seeing this title, tried to find a copy of it but his efforts were in vain. Then he went to the Holy City on a pilgrimage, and there, in "Arafât, he posted a crier to say: God's mercy to anyone who can direct us to find *Farq mâ*

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(1) *Al-Ihyâ'* I, 49.

(2) Al-Zarnûjî 14, *Kashf al-Zunûn* I : 29.

(3) Al-Zarnûjî p. 10.

(4) Ibn Miskawayh : *Tahdhib al-Akhlâq* : p. 21.



*Bayn al-Nabiy wa al-Mutanabbî of al-Jahiz.*» <sup>1</sup>

2. Ibn al-Muqaffa", urging the students of his age to endure any discomfort and even hardship for the sake of knowledge, states that the previous generations were so keen on obtaining knowledge that knowledge was often inscribed on stones in the absence of easier materials, to guarantee that useful knowledge would not be lost. <sup>2</sup> Moreover Yûnis ibn *Habîb* once heard a certain Abû al-Muhallam reciting one of his poems, and having nothing upon which to write it down, he wrote it upon his arm. <sup>3</sup>
3. Abû Ishâq al-Kazarûnî expressed his great longing to join the school of Muhammad Ibn Ishâq Abû "Alî, but his father told him that as they were very poor, he must learn a trade by which to earn his living. The young boy accepted his father's advice, but, in addition to his daily work in the trade, he used to go at dawn to join circles and acquire knowledge until the sun rose. At last he became a famous learned man. <sup>4</sup>
4. The daily income of Ibrâhîm al-Zajjâj (316 A.H.) was one Dirham and a half. He went to study under al-Mubarrad and undertook to pay him one Dirham every day not only during his course of study but during his whole lifetime. <sup>5</sup>
5. On his way to the Caliph al Râdî bi. Allâh, Abû Bakr b. al-Anbârî (327 A.H.) passed the slave market in which he saw a very charming slave-girl whose beauty touched his heart. When he reached the Caliph, Abû Bakr mentioned the girl, and the Caliph, without in-

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(1) *Yâqût : Mu'jam al-Udabâ'*, Vol. 6, pp. 72—73.

(2) *Al-Adab al-Kabir ; Rasâ'il al-Bulaghâ'*, p. 40.

(3) Ahmad Amîn : *Duha al-Islâm*, Vol. II, p. 318.

(4) *Di Vita Des Scheich*, p. 14, Abû Ishâq al-Kazarûnî, edited by Fritz Meier, 1949.

(5) *Yâqût : Mu'jam al-Udabâ'*, I : 47.

forming him, sent a man to buy her and to take her to al-Anbârî's house. Later in the evening Abû Bakr returned home with a theoretical question in his mind to look up, but, at home, he found the beautiful girl waiting for him. While trying to look the point up, he was absorbed by thoughts of the girl and her charms, and finding himself thus distracted he called his servant boy and asked him to take the girl and sell her saying: «Nothing should occupy my mind when I am increasing my knowledge.» <sup>1</sup>

6. Shaikh "Alî ibn "Isâ al-Wâlwâlijî recites the following story : «I visited Abû al-Rai/hân al-Bairûnî when he was on his death-bed, and he asked me to explain to him a certain point of jurisprudence. Pitying him in his plight, I replied: Is it the moment to raise such a question? He answered: O man I had better leave this world knowing this point than to leave it while ignorant of it.» <sup>2</sup>
7. Al-Ahmar was one of the bodyguard at al-Rashîd's Palace. He loved learning very much, but he could not spare enough time to attend lectures. Meanwhile al-Kisâ'î used to frequent the Palace for the literary Salons and this was a good chance for al-Ahmar to satisfy his thirst for knowledge. Indeed he made full use of this opportunity; he would meet al-Kisâ'î on his arrival, help him to dismount and accompany him as far as the curtain which al-Ahmar was not allowed to pass. At the close of these meetings, al-Ahmar would again meet al-Kisâ'î and go back with him not leaving him until he had helped him to mount. On his way to and from the Palace, al-Kisâ'î answered questions asked by al-Ahmar on matters which the latter had been unable

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(1) Yâqût : *Mu"jam al-Udabâ'*, 7 : 75.

(2) *Ibid.* 6 : 309.

to understand by himself. By this means al-Ahmar became one of the most learned men of his age, <sup>1</sup> and rose to the position of professor to al-Amin, the son of al-Rashid. <sup>2</sup>

Without the willing help of al-Kisâ'i, al-Ahmar's ambition would have been frustrated. Indeed students' enthusiasm for learning always presupposes a similar enthusiasm on the part of teachers: so that it is not irrelevant to record here the following anecdotes:

1. Bakkâr b. Qutaibah was an eminent scholar in Ahmad b. Tûlûn's Court. During the dispute between Ibn Tûlûn and al-Muwaffaq the former asked Bakkâr to curse al-Muwaffaq in his speech before the Friday prayer. Bakkâr refused to submit to this order, and consequently he was imprisoned. He spent two years in prison during<sup>3</sup> which he continued to teach. He used a hole in the wall to convey his voice to the audience who crowded outside the jail. <sup>3</sup>
2. The scholar, Abû al-Hasan al-Zayyât was sitting surrounded by his audience when a lady came and asked him a certain question. The lady after receiving the reply left the place and went away. Shortly after that Abû al-Hasan remembered that he had been mistaken in his reply. Without any delay, he jumped up and ran out following the lady, until he caught her up and corrected the answer. When he came back and explained the matter to his audience who had been anxious to know it, they expressed their readiness to have done that on his behalf. But he replied: « It gave me very great pleasure, besides it was my fault and I felt bound to correct it myself. » <sup>4</sup>

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(1) Yâqût, *Mu'jam al-Udabâ'*, 5 : 108, 109.

(2) Ibn Khaldûn : *al-Muqaddimah*, p. 399.

(3) Ibn Hajar : *Raf' al-Isr*, p. 26, MS. Egypt. Ibn Khallikân I : 128.

(4) Al-'Abdarî : *al-Madkhal*, pp. 108—109.

## Travel For Study

In opening this section I wish to quote the Prophet's Traditions which say: « Obtaining knowledge will not be possible with bodily ease. » <sup>1</sup> and « Whoever sets out seeking knowledge will be walking in the path of God until his return, and whoever dies while travelling for learning will be regarded as a martyr. » <sup>2</sup> These maxims were often expressed in poetry or in prose to remind Muslim students that travels and trouble are inevitable if knowledge is to be gained. An Arab poet puts it as follows: Acquiring knowledge will not be achieved cheaply; to have honey, one must endure the stings of bees. <sup>3</sup> And al-Isfahânî asserts that a man cannot be well-educated unless he neglects comfortable furniture and luxury. <sup>4</sup> Thus a great number of Muslim students left their homes and dispersed in search of learning. In an age when travel was so hard with no paved roads or organized caravans, they did not hesitate to undertake long journeys. The wide Islamic world seemed one country to them and they never felt foreigners in any part of it.

Before proceeding to a chronological study of travels, I give a brief quotation from Ibn Khaldûn. He says: « Travelling to acquire knowledge and meet eminent scholars is an essential project for students. Certainly there is no single *savant* who can be acquainted with several branches of knowledge or even know all the problems of one branch; so in order to have wide and deep knowledge a student has to profit by travelling and meeting as many as possible of the famous scholars. Moreover it is believed that the ability of the student can be vouched for by the number of his teachers, and thus he has to do his best to come into contact with the greatest possible number of the professors of his time. » <sup>5</sup>

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(1) Abû al-Hâj : *al-Alif bâ li al-Alibâ* 3 A MS. Istanbul.

(2) *Minhâj al-Muta'allim* 16 B MS.

(3) Ibn Jumâ'ah : *Tadhkirat al-Sâmi' wa al-Mulakallim*, p. 27.

(4) *Muhâdarât al-Udabâ'*, I, p. 28.

(5) *Al-Muqaddimah* 399—400, See also *Kashf al-Zunûn*, I, p. 27



Travels for intellectual purposes started from the time of the first Muslim generation. With the conquest of foreign realms, many Muslim scholars deserted the capital of the empire and established their cultural centres in the recently conquered places. So we find that:

"Abd Allâh b. "Umar	taught in Medina
"Abd Allâh b. "Abbâs	taught in Mecca
Mu"âdh b. Jabal	taught in Yemen
Abû Mûsâ al-Ash"arî	taught in al-Basrah
"Abd Allâh b. Mas"ûd.	taught in al-Kûfah
"Abd Allâh b. al-Sâmit and Abû al-Dardâ'	taught in Syria
"Abd Allâh b. "Amr b. al"As	taught in Egypt

Everyone of these companions had, of course, his own personality and way of thought. Furthermore, there were certain Traditions of which only a few companions had a first-hand knowledge. Muslims were very eager to collect the Prophet's Traditions, and the only legitimate way was to listen directly to the Companion who had heard the *Hadîth* from the Prophet. So travel began.

The next generation produced numerous scholars of varying ability. Their inclinations and thoughts differed greatly, a fact which widened the differences among the educational centres. A glance of the scholars' names given below will suggest to the reader the particular bent or tendency of each intellectual seat.

Sa"îd b. al-Musayyab	in al-Medina
Rabî"at al-Ra"i	in Qubâ'
"Atâ' b. Rabâh	in Mecca
"Atâ' b. "Abd Allâh al-Khurâsânî	in Khurâsân
al-Hasan al-Basrî	in al-Basrah
al-Nakh"î	in al-Kûfah
Mak'hûl	in Syria
Yahyâ b. Kathîr	in al-Yamâmah
Tâwûs	in al-Yeman

Under such circumstances Muslim students were encouraged to travel to collect Traditions and to join the various scholars. Travels were made, too, by students of language, philosophy and medicine to improve and increase their knowledge. «Seekers of knowledge as a whole», says Professor Nicholson, «travelled over three continents and returned home like bees laden with honey, to impart the precious stores which they had accumulated to crowds of eager disciples, and to compile with incredible industry those works of encyclopaedic range and erudition from which modern science, in the widest sense of the word, has derived far more than is generally supposed.» <sup>2</sup>

A few examples will illustrate this admirable activity:

On hearing that a dweller in Egypt called "Abd-Allâh al-Juhânî had received a certain Tradition from the Prophet, Jâbir b. "Abd-Allâh, a native of al-Medinah, bought a camel and made a month's journey to Egypt, where he met al-Juhânî and heard the Tradition from him. <sup>3</sup>

While Jâbir was financially able to buy a camel for his expedition, it is recorded that the son of al-Kharîb al-Tabrîzî was not able to buy or even to hire any mount to go from Tabrîz to al-Ma"arraḥ to revise a certain work <sup>4</sup> with Abû al-"Alâ' al-Ma"arrî. But this did not discourage him or prevent him from making the journey. He put his tomes into a nosebag, carried it upon his shoulders and set out on foot. The nosebag, was so heavy and the distance was so great that when he arrived at al-Ma"arraḥ the books were moist from his perspiration. <sup>5</sup>

(1) Yâqût : *Mu"jam al-Buldân*, IV, p. 412—413, and *Husn al-Muhâdarah* of al-Suyûtî, I, p. 134.

(2) *Literary History of the Arabs*, p. 281.

(3) Al-Suyûtî : *Husn al-Muhâdarah*, I, p. 88.

(4) The work was a copy in many volumes of *Kitâb al-Tahdhîb* by Abû Mansûr al-Azhârî.

(5) Ibn Khallikân, II, p. 346, and Yâqût : *Irshâd*, VII : 286.

Yahyâ b. Yahyâ al-Laythî ( d. 234 A.H.) of Cordova, after attending the lectures of the Western *savants*, went to the East where he joined al-Imâm Mâlik in al-Medîna, Sufyân b. "Uyaynah in Mecca and heard al-Layth b. Sa'd, "Abd Allâh b. Wahb and "Abd al-Rahmân b. al-Qâsim in Egypt and then returned to Andalusia. <sup>1</sup>

Al-Bukhârî was a well-known traveller and collector of Traditions. His extensive journeys covered Khurâsân, al-Jibâl, al-"Irâq, al-Hijâz, Syria and Egypt.<sup>2</sup>

Sahl b. "Abd Allâh al-Tustarî left his home and people when he was 13 years old to seek an answer to a certain question. He first went to al-Basrah, but he failed to find a satisfactory reply. Then he proceeded to "Abâdân where Hamzah b. Abî "Abd Allâh successfully answered his question. The young student was so impressed that he stayed a long time with his professor to benefit from his wide knowledge.<sup>3</sup>

The medical student, Hunain b. Ishâq, is recorded to have said: « I made several tours to various places until I reached the furthest cities of the Byzantine Empire. My purpose was to collect medical books for translation, and to increase my knowledge.» <sup>4</sup>

Linguistic students, as had already been described, <sup>5</sup> travelled to the desert to receive the correct language directly from pure Arabs. Even in the arid desert, they showed great enthusiasm.

Abû al-"Abbâs, a cousin of al-Asma"î, felt homesick in al-Bâdiyah and decided to return home but he was introduced to a beduin from whom he heard a certain poem. He was so

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(1) Ibn Khallikân, II, pp. 320—321.

(2) *Ibid.* II, p. 649.

(3) Al-Ghazâlî : *al-Ihyâ'*, III, p. 59.

(4) Ibn Abî Usaibi"ah : *"Uyûn al-Anbâ'*, I, p. 187, and al-Qifî : *Ta'rîkh al-Hukamâ'*, p. 173.

(5) See Chapter I, Section G.

pleased that he swore to having forgotten all about his home and people. <sup>1</sup>

«Al-Bairûnî, a native of Khawârizm who flourished in the age of Mahmûd of Ghaznah and Mas"ûd travelled into India, lived among the Hindoos, studied their language, their science, their philosophy and literature, their customs and manners, their laws, their religion and their peculiar superstitions, the geographical and physical conditions of the country, and embodied his observations in a work diversified by quotations from Homer and Plato and other Greek writers and philosophers.» <sup>2</sup>

Travel, however, lost some of its significance from the fourth century. That was due to the practice of writing down the Traditions and allowing students to rely, in their study, upon written collections without meeting the Traditionists. <sup>3</sup> In the fifth century schools began to flourish and to them the most learned men of the time were invited, and so travels were directed mostly to the schools which were well-equipped and staffed. Thus Muhammad b. Ishâq b. Mandah ( d. 355 A. H. ) is called the last of the travellers. <sup>4</sup> He spent such a long time on his tours that he heard 1700 teachers, and when he came back home, his books were 40 camel loads. <sup>5</sup>

Another kind of travellers should be referred to. They were not students seeking teachers but were scholars attempting

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(1) Ahmad Amîn : *Duhâ al-Islâm*, II, p. 318.

(2) Sayid Ameer "Ali : *A Short History of the Saracens*, p. 463.

(3) Al-Khatîb al-Baghdâdî : *Taqyid al-"Ilm*, p. 101.

(4) This statement cannot be unreservedly accepted as we know that many scholars made long journeys after that date. "Ali b. "Asâkir ( d. 571 A. H. ), for example, was induced for purposes of study to visit al-"Irâq, Mecca, Medîna, al-Kûfah, Isfahân; al-Yahûdiyya, Marw, al-Shahman, Nîshâbûr, Harât, Sarakhs, Abiward, Tûs, Bistâm, al-Raiy and Zinjân.

( Yâqût : *Mu"jam al-Udabâ'*, V, p. 140.)

(5) Al-Zurqânî : The commentary of *al-Mawâhib al-Laduniyyah* by al-Qastalânî, I, p. 230.



to collect their observations on the spot. They had various interests such as religion, sociology, education, geography and topography. They produced very useful works upon which most of the recent studies depend. Al-Ya''qûbî, al-Isṭakhrî, al-Maqdisî Ibn Hawqal, Nâsir-i Khusrau , Ibn Jubair and Ibn Battûṭâh are but a few of this class.

Astonishing facilities and help were granted to Muslim travellers. The large work of Ibn Battûṭâh contains numerous examples of such assistance. Let us read a few successive pages to extract what may illustrate this point.

He says: «When we came to Aqsrâ, a city under the Iraqi king, we were met by Prince al-Sharîf Husain who cordially received us and whose hospitality was beyond description.<sup>1</sup> In Sîwâs, an Iraqi city, too, we accepted the invitation of Akhî Jalabî to be his guests. Many other people came to invite us and were very disappointed when they knew that our stay had been arranged with Akhî Jalabî, while the latter was happy and pleased to have us.<sup>2</sup> The Prince of this province presented us with a horse, clothes and money. Moreover he wrote to his governors in different places to welcome us and supply all our needs.<sup>3</sup> In Arz al-Rum our host was a Shaikh over 130 years old , but he himself used to serve us when we were having our meals. Next day we intended to move but the aged man did not allow us to do so and asserted that the shortest time for sojourning was three days.<sup>4</sup> When we came to Birkî, we asked the first native we met to direct us to our host's house. The man pretended to lead us to our goal but instead he led us to his own place where he was very generous towards us. Next day he took us to our host's house.»<sup>5</sup>

We close this section by citing a brief summary of the

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(1) *Tuhfat al-Nuzzâr*, II : 286.

(2) *Ibid.* II, p. 290.

(3) *Ibid.* II, p. 292.

(4) *Tuhfat al-Nuzzâr*, II, p. 295.

(5) *Ibid.*

extensive advice given by Abû *Hanîfah* to Yûsuf al-Samtî. The latter, when he wanted to return home to al-Basrah after finishing his course of study under Abû *Hanîfah*, went to his professor to bid him good-bye. The professor detained him saying : « Seek not to depart precipitately as I will summon you at a fitting time to expound the manner in which you may make of your knowledge an ornament rather than a blemish, and how, by being a learned man, you may win favour and not disfavour among your people.» Al-Samtî, then, postponed his return until Abû *Hanîfah* arranged for a meeting with him in which the Professor gave the following advice:

« I imagine that you will enter al-Basrah in pride thinking that you are of higher standing than the people, and in any disputed question you will be always expecting others to submit to your views.» Al-Samtî commented : « Yes verily I would have acted thus . » Abû *Hanîfah* said: « When you enter al-Basrah the people will receive you cordially and will flock to visit you; then treat each one according to his status; be gracious towards men of dignity, honour the learned class, be kind and respectful to aged persons and with the young be pleasant and sociable. Approach the public, make friends with good people and do not neglect officials and those in authority.

« Be generous as a miserly person will never gain love and respect, return visits to those who visit you, be grateful for any kindness you may receive and forgive offences. Always be in contact with your friends; visit the sick, congratulate in fortune and condole in misfortune.

«Concerning knowledge, I would advise you not to say what is beyond men's understanding or to oppose the views of others with acerbity, and in case of dispute, state your opinions if you are asked and be circumspect in imparting your knowledge.» <sup>1</sup>

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(1) *Wasiyyat Abû Hanîfah* I, B—6 A abridged MS. Istanbul.

### The Education of Women \*

The considerable number of works I have studied for women's education in the Middle Ages led me to the conclusion that the woman of that period in the East as well as in the West enjoyed far less educational opportunities than those enjoyed by contemporary man.

Before entering on a study of women's education in the Muslim world I wish to quote a few passages illustrating the intellectual standard of women in Christendom at the same period.

Throughout the whole of the Middle Ages European women received little consideration in accordance with « the Catholic Church's view of woman as a second-rate being » as Wieth-Knudsen says, adding that « the Middle Ages were very careful not to give her any kind of authority, much less power, beyond her narrow housekeeping sphere ». <sup>1</sup>

We find this view amplified in the *Encyclopaedia of Education* as follows:

« Francesco da Barberino allows a noble girl to read and write so that she may be able to govern her estate when she grows up; as to the daughters of esquires, judges, doctors and other gentlemen, he debates for some time and decides that it is better for them not to learn reading and writing while he forbids

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\* It is my intention to limit the scope of this section to the education of Muslim women. For facts about the Arab women of the pre-Islamic period as well as problems connected with Muslim women-other than education-the following works may be of some use :

- a) *The Arab Woman* by M.E.T. Mugannam, Tonbridge Printers Limited, 1937.
- b) *Women in Ayyâm al-'Arab* by Ilse Lichtenstadter, The Royal Arabic Society, 1935.
- c) *Marriage in Early Islam* by Gertrude H. Stern, The Royal Arabic Society, 1939.
- d) *The Real Status of Women in Islam* : an article in the 19th C. Sept. 1891.
- (1) *Feminism* by K.A. Wieth-Knudsen, translated from the Danish by Arthur G. Chater, p. 209.

the daughters of merchants and artisans to have any learning.»<sup>1</sup>

A similar picture of upper class women in this period is given by John Langdon Davies in his book «*A Short History of Women*». He asks: «What sort of life did the lady of chivalry lead in her castle? In the first place she had in many cases some rudiments of an education. She had probably spent many hours as a child with a tutor or in an amateurish sort of school where she had been taught to read. She could recite stories and romances which she bought from itinerant minstrels».<sup>2</sup>

We may safely assume that this standard of education was not reached by women of the lower classes.

Conditions in England in the later Middle Ages are well summed up by A. Abram who says: «Far less importance was attached to the education of women than of men and a far lower standard of knowledge was required of them». The knight of La Tour-Landry, who was considered a great authority on the subject, wished his daughters to be able to read, and thought that «Maydenes shulde be putte into scole to lerne vertuous thinges of the scripture, wherethorugh thei may the beter see and knowe thaire sauement and to dueil and for to eschewe al that is evel in manere.» But he does not seem to have desired any further intellectual training for them. Testators never left bequests in their wills for the education of girls, but, instead, gave them marriage portions. Probably most parents were quite satisfied if their daughters acquired a little elementary education, and enough practical knowledge of house-hold management and domestic work to fit them to become wives.<sup>3</sup>

This is the medieval European girl as described by European scholars. Leaving her we turn to the Muslim woman, I will record my disagreement with those writers who give the impression that Education was widespread among women. Admittedly

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(1) *Encyclopaedia of Education*, IV, p. 1790.

(2) *A Short History of Women*, p. 220.

(3) *English Life and Manners in the later Middle Ages*, p. 218.



a few women took advantage of educational facilities, but there is no proof, as far as I can see, that such learning was widespread. And without doubt the proportion of cultured females to illiterates was very much less than among the male population. One may ask what the reason for that was, seeing that Islamic religion does not consider sex a bar in the acquisition of knowledge. The reason, I believe, lies in the difficulties which usually faced the seeker of knowledge. Journeys, often very long ones, were almost indispensable for study and students had to undergo various kinds of hardship. The Arab woman was not exposed to such trouble as she occupied a sacred position in society, a position which an Arab poet puts as follows: « It is our duty to fight and defend our people unto death while it is the privilege of the fair sex to move luxuriously in sweeping trains ». Thus, in number, they were backward in comparison with Muslim men.

The opportunity, however, was given to a considerable number of them, who took part in every branch of the culture of that time.

Starting from the early days of Islâm, we refer to the statement made by al-Balâdhuri. He says: « At the beginning of Islâm, there were five Arab ladies who could read and write. He gives the names of *Hafsah*, the daughter of 'Umar, *Umm Kulthûm bint 'Uqbah*, 'A'ishah bint Sa'd, *Karîmah bint al-Miqdâd* and above all *al-Shaffâ'*, the daughter of 'Abd Allâh al-'Adawiyyah, who had taught *Hafsah* and whom the Prophet requested to continue teaching her after their marriage. Two more wives of the Prophet namely 'A'ishah and *Umm Salamah* could read although they were unable to write.<sup>1</sup>

The example of *al-Shaffâ'*'s teaching *Hafsah* privately was taken as a model for the teaching of girls. I have found no evidence to show that the girl joined the *Kuttâb* or the women learnt with the men. It is recorded that a group of women met the Prophet and asked him to appoint a weekly day for teaching

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(1) Al-Balâdhuri : *Futûh al-Buldân* p. 458.

ladies. The Prophet did so and met them regularly to teach and exhort them. Some writers fell into error on this point. Khalil Tûrah in his work *al-Tarbiyah wa al-Ta'lim 'Ind al-'Arab* p. 69 attributes three quotations <sup>1</sup> to *al-Aghânî* to prove that the girl joined the *Kuttâb*, with the boy, but these passages do not appear thus in the source. Al-Ahwânî, in considering this point, gives contradictory statements. At first he records that girls were taught in the *Kuttâb* <sup>2</sup> and further on he says: « It was the custom for girls to be educated at home. » <sup>3</sup>

I am convinced that the medieval Muslim girl received her education privately, a view which has been stated in the introduction to Ibn Sahnûn's *Adâb al-Mu'allimîn* which reads: « Very often the father would teach his daughters as did 'Isâ b. Miskîn ( d. 278 A.H.) who was in the habit of sitting to teach his students until the afternoon prayer and then he would call his daughters, nieces and granddaughters to teach them the *Qur'ân* and other knowledge. » <sup>4</sup>

Al-A'shâ , the famous poet, taught his daughter until she became such a cultured lady with such exquisite taste that her father used to rely upon her in criticising his newly-composed poems. <sup>5</sup>

In some cases the tutors and private teachers were appointed to teach the female relations of princes and people of wealth. <sup>6</sup>

By private education however, a considerable number of women attained considerable accomplishments in intellectual studies especially in Jurisprudence.

'A'ishah, the Prophet's wife, praised the Ansârî women for not having been prevented by shyness from mastering this

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(1) The reference he gives for the first and second of them is *al-Aghânî* Vol. XIV p. 49 and the reference for the third quotation is *al-Aghânî* XXI p. 48.

(2) *Al-Ta'lim 'ind al-Qâbisî* p. 87.

(3) *Ibid.* p. 163.

(4) *Ibid.* p. 22.

(5) *Al-Aghânî* XV p. 106.

(6) *Adâb al-Mu'allimîn* p. 23.

subject. <sup>1</sup>

The Muslim woman did not gain only the Islamic learning but also the Islamic character and nobility. In this connection I cannot resist telling the following famous tale which indicates the level reached by a Muslim lady:

In 73 A.H. al-Hajjâj's troops heavily defeated the army of 'Abd Allâh b. al-Zubair who had been claiming the Caliphate. Most of the latter's followers surrendered including a large number of 'Abd Allâh's fellow tribesmen. In despair, Ibn al-Zubair went to his mother, Asmâ', the daughter of Abû Bakr, where the following colloquy took place:

Ibn al-Zubair: « Mother, my followers have forsaken me. The few broken people I still have are likely to cease helping me any moment. Meanwhile my opponent is prepared to accept my conditions for surrender. Please advise me.»

Asmâ' : « O, my son; You know yourself better than I do. If you believe that right is on your side and you are combatting heresy, then carry on until your death and avoid subjugation to the Umayyad people. If you are seeking worldly things, then how evil a slave are you, destroying yourself and your followers for a paltry aim. Do not yield because of your followers' weakness, as that should not be a good man's act. Do remember that your friends died in the same cause which you must defend until death or triumph. Do remember, too, that you are not immortal.»

'Abd Allâh: « Mother, I fear that the Syrians may have me hanged, drawn and quartered .»

Asmâ' : « Son, a sheep never feels pain from being skinned after it has been slaughtered.» <sup>2</sup>

In the course of time and with the diffusion of culture we find that Muslim women, as has already been stated, participated

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(1) Al-Bukhârî I, p. 46.

(2) Ibn 'Asâkir : *Tahdhib Tarikh Dimashq*, VII, pp. 415—416, and Ibn al-Athîr IV, p. 147.

in almost all cultural activities. On the following pages, we will briefly illustrate the part played by muslim women in different subjects:

### Religious Studies

It seems that Traditions and Jurisprudences were favourite subjects for ladies. We have a large number of women who can be considered notable figures among Traditionists and Jurists.

Biographical notes on 1543 female Traditionists, who flourished in the early times of Islâm are included in *al-Isâbah fi Tamyîz al-Sahâbah* by Ibn Hajar. Al-Nawâwî in his work *Tahdhîb al-Asmâ'*, al-Khatîb al-Baghdâdî in *Târîkh Baghdâd* and al-Sakhâwî in *al-Daw' al-Lâmi'* all devote much space to women who were famous for their learning and scholarship.

A brief account of a few of the women known for their competence in religious studies will be given here:

Pre-eminence must be assigned to "A'ishah, the Prophet's wife. It is related that the Prophet told his followers to rely upon her for half of their religious instruction. She was credited with a thousand Traditions received directly from the Prophet.<sup>1</sup>

Nafisah, a descendant of "Alî, was such a great authority on Traditions that Imâm al-Shâfi'î sat in her circle in al-Fustât when he was at the height of his fame.<sup>2</sup>

Fâtimah bint al-Aqra" was a renowned scholar and a gifted calligrapher. She attended the lectures of many brilliant teachers and from her considerable number of students received their knowledge.<sup>3</sup>

Shaikha Shuhda, designated Fakhr al-Nisâ', lectured publicly, at the Cathedral Mosque of Baghdâd to large audiences on literature, rhetoric and poetry. She occupies in the annals of Islâm a position of equality with the most distinguished

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(1) Al-Nawâwî : *Tahdhîb al-Asmâ'*, p. 848.

(2) Ibn Khallikân, II, p, 251.

(3) Ibn al-Athîr : *al-Kâmil*, X, p. 108.



"*Ulamā*". 1

Zainab bint al-Sha'rî, an illustrious lady, gained her knowledge and obtained certificates from the eminent theologians of the time. Ibn Khallikân states that she had granted him a certificate when he was two years old, 2 a practice which was current at that time for the purpose of blessing and encouraging the child to do his best and deserve such certificates.

And lastly it is remarkable that a group of over 500 students formed the circle of "Unaidah, the grandmother of Abû al-Khair al-Aqta". 3

Mention should be made of learned women to whose knowledge and instruction many learned men were deeply indebted.

Al-Khatîb al-Baghdâdî, the celebrated scholar, was a pupil of Karîmah bint Ahmad al-Marwazî. She interpreted and explained to him the *Sahîh al-Bukhârî*. 4

"Alî b. "Asâkir had over eighty women among his numerous professors. 5

In counting his teachers. Abû Hayyân of Granada mentions three noted ladies namely Mu'nisah, the daughter of al-Malik al-Kâmil, Shâmiyyah, the daughter of al-Hâfiz and Zainab, the daughter of "Abd al-Latîf al-Baghdâdî. 6

Two distinguished ladies "A'ishah bint Muhammad and Zainab bint Kamâl al-Dîn gave certificates to the well-known traveller Ibn Battûtah. 7

## Literature

It is a well-known fact that many women became famous poetesses and rhetoricians. They were in many cases equal to

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(1) Ameer "Alî : *The Spirit of Islâm* p. 255.

(2) Ibn Khallikân I, p. 278.

(3) *Journal Asiatique* 1930 : *Kitâb al-Shakwâ*, p. 50.

(4) Yâqût : *Mû"jam al-Udabâ*, I, p. 247.

(5) *Ibid.* V, p. 140 and al-Nu"ymî, I, p. 101.

(6) Al-Maqqarî : *Nafh al-Tib*, I, p. 607.

(7) *Tuhfat al Nazzâr*, I, p. 212.

or even better than contemporary men. Here are a few examples:

Al-Nadr Ibn al-Hârith used to assault the Prophet and cause him great trouble before the Hijrah. So when he was captured at the battle of Badr, the Prophet had him executed. His sister Qatilah composed a very well-constructed and moving elegy. On hearing it the Prophet declared that such a poem might have induced him to forgive the guilty man.<sup>1</sup>

Al-Farazdaq's wife was so well-versed in literature that her husband and his poetic rival Jarîr resorted to her for judgment. Her decision was that in the best passages the two were equal but in the inferior ones, Jarîr was the better.<sup>2</sup>

In addition to distinguished oratorical and poetical talents, Safiyya, a native of Seville, excelled all others in the calligraphic art. Her penmanship was at once the subject of admiration and an example to be copied by the most skilful scribes.<sup>3</sup>

Zainab and Hamda, the daughters of Ziyâd, were excellent poetesses, thoroughly versed in all branches of learning and science. They were beautiful, rich, amiable and modest. Their love of learning brought them into the company of scholars with whom they mixed on perfect terms of equality with great composure and dignity. They never forgot the rules of their sex.<sup>4</sup>

Maryam bint Abi Ya"qûb al-Ansarî was an excellent poetess and teacher of literature. Her circle was formed for ladies who flocked to profit by her knowledge.<sup>5</sup>

Badâniyyah received her education from her master Abû al-Matraf "Abd al-Rahmân but she excelled him. She learnt *al-Kâmil* of al-Mubarrad and *al-Nawâdir* of al-Qâlî and was a great expert on prosody.<sup>6</sup>

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(1) Ibn Hishâm, II, p. 119.

(2) Al-Jâhiz : *al-Bayân wa al-Tabyîn*, II, p. 93.

(3) Ameer "Alî : *A Short History of the Saracens*, p. 569.

(4) *Nafh al-Tib*, p. 1142, *al-Ihâtah*, I, p. 315 and Yâqût, IV, p. 144.

(5) Al-Maqqarî : *Nafh al-Tib*, p. 1143.

(6) *Ibid.* p. 1078

*Hafsah al-Rakûniyyah* of Granada was renowned for her nobility, beauty, wealth and talents. Her poetry was extremely tender as appears in the verses quoted by Yâqût and Ibn al-Khatîb. She was the teacher and tutor of the ladies in the Caliph's palace.<sup>1</sup>

A valuable manuscript entitled *Nuzhat al-Julasâ' fi Akhbâr al-Nisâ'* by al-Suyûtî exists in al-Zâhiriyyah library in Damascus. This manuscript contains short biographies of thirty-seven poetesses of whom we choose one example:

Taqiyyah Umm "Alî bint Abî al-Faraj ( d. 577 A. H. ) was a talented lady. On one occasion she composed a laudatory poem to Taqî al-Dîn "Umar, the nephew of Saladin. The poem was a symposium and in it the lady beautifully and precisely described a drinking party, the glasses and all that usually takes place in such a meeting as if she were a habitual drinker. On reading the poem Taqî al-Dîn proclaimed that the poetess must have had experience in this respect. The lady then composed a martial poem in which she gave accurate details of a battle and a correct picture of warriors in the field. She sent the poem to Taqî al-Dîn with a note explaining that she had had as much experience of drinking parties as she had had of battles. On seeing this poem Taqî al-Dîn recognised and praised her high imaginative powers. <sup>2</sup>

### Music and Singing

«Music accompanied the Arab», says H.G. Farmer, «from the cradle to the grave, from the lullaby to the elegy. Every moment of his life seems to have had its particular music - joy and sorrow, work and play, battle-throng and religious exercise. Almost every Arab of substance in those days had his singing-girl, who appears to have been as much in evidence in the house-

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(1) Yâqût : *Irshâd*, IV, pp. 119-120 and *al-Ihâtah*, I, pp 316—318.

(2) 3 A, B.

hold as the pianoforte is with us today.» <sup>1</sup> From this statement the reader can imagine the vast number of girls who were skilled in music and singing. We refer to the famous work, «*al-Aghânî*», for notable descriptions of many of them, and here, relying upon this authority and upon *Nihâyat al-Arab* and *Nafh al-Tib*, we give brief notes on some of these girls:

Jamîlah was one of the earliest Muslim vocalists; from her Ma'bad, Ibn 'A'ishah, Habbâbah, Sallâmah, 'Aqîlah, Khalidah and Rabîhah received their knowledge of singing. The celebrated singer, Ma'bad, used to confess that he and his colleagues were the fruit of her learning and without her teaching they would not have gained their fame. She was the judge in the competitions among Ibn Sarîh, al-Gharîd, Ma'bad and other musicians of the time. <sup>2</sup>

Danânîr, who was associated with the Barmecide family, was an excellent singer. Besides winning a reputation as a singer, she was well-known for her beauty, wit and knowledge of literature. Al-Isfahânî records that she was the author of a certain work on the art of singing. <sup>3</sup>

'Ulayyah, the daughter of the Caliph al-Mahdî, was an expert poetess, distinguished melodist and a celebrated singer. She and her brother Ibrâhîm b. al-Mahdî were unequalled as singers and she is reported to have excelled him. 'Arîb, the well-known singer, describes it as the best day in her life when she had heard 'Ulayyah singing while her brother Ya'qûb accompanied her on a flute. <sup>4</sup>

Mutayyam al-Hâshimiyyah, the pupil of Ishâq and of his father, was renowned for her beauty, singing and knowledge of literature. On a certain occasion she was singing to the Caliph

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(1) *The Legacy of Islâm*, edited by Sir Thomas Arnold, p. 358.

(2) See *al-Aghânî*, VII, pp. 124—148, and al-Nuwairî: *Nihâyat al-Arab*, V : 49—50.

(3) See *al-Aghânî*, XVI, pp. 136—139.

(4) *Ibid.* IX, pp. 83—95 and al-Nuwairî: *Nihâyat al-Arab*, IV, pp. 231—237.



al-Mu'tasim while Ibrâhîm b. al-Mahdî was present. After finishing the song, Ibrâhîm asked her to repeat it, but she explained to her master that Ibrâhîm would learn the tune from her and so she obtained her master's permission not to grant an *encore*. Some days later Ibrâhîm was going home while she, in her house, was singing the same song. He quietly waited until he had memorized the air. Then he knocked on her door and defiantly told her that he had achieved his object. <sup>1</sup>

Khadîjah bint al-Ma'mûn was an excellent poetess and singer. One night Shâriyah sang a well-composed lyric to the Caliph al-Mutawakkil. He was so delighted that he asked from whom she had received this sweet song and the reply was that the lyric as well as the tune were the work of Khadijah bint al-Ma'mûn. <sup>2</sup>

The palace of the Caliph 'Abd al-Ra'mân II had a wing called «Dâr al-Madaniyyât» in which the singers from the Medina, Qalam, 'Alam and Fadl lived. This last was the most distinguished one of the group. <sup>3</sup>

'Ubaidah al-Tambûriyyah was a woman of great beauty, virtue, and talent. She played exquisitely on the instrument from which she derived her title and moreover she possessed a voice of great melody. <sup>4</sup>

### Medicine

The humanitarian duties which in this age of civilization are done by Red Cross organizations were in most of the battles of Islam carried out by women. <sup>5</sup> When Muslim troops were organized in preparation for the conquest of Khaibar, Umayyah bint Qais al-Ghaffâriyyah came to the Prophet with a group of

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(1) *Al-Aghânî*, VII, pp. 31—38.

(2) *Al-Aghânî*, XIV, p. 114.

(3) *Al-Maqqarî : Naf' al-Tib*, II, p. 578.

(4) *Amîr 'Alî : A Short History of the Saracens*, p. 456

(5) *Mogannam : The Arab Woman*, p. 25.

ladies and asked his permission to accompany the army to bandage wounds and offer whatever help they could. The Prophet permitted them and they performed these duties.<sup>1</sup> Al-Rabî' bint Mu'awwadh, too, is recorded to have said that ladies used to accompany Muslim armies for the purpose of supplying water, attending the wounded and conveying the casualties back to Medîna.<sup>2</sup>

Moreover we have records of women who gained a good reputation as medical scholars:

Zainab of the Banî Awd was an eminent physician and an expert oculist.<sup>3</sup>

Umm al-Hasan bint al-Qâdî Abî Ja'far al-Tanjâlî was a lady of wide knowledge in various subjects but she was particularly famous as a medical doctor.<sup>4</sup>

Al-Hafîd b. Zahr's sister and her daughter, who flourished at the time of al-Mansûr b. Abî 'Amir, were proficient doctors generally, and in gynaecology they had experience and detailed knowledge. They were the only medical scholars to be invited to treat the ladies of the Palace.<sup>5</sup>

### Military Service

Islâm seems to have produced a considerable number of women warriors. « We read of Nasîbah, the wife of Zaid Ibn 'Asim who took part in the famous battle of Ohod. When the enemy made a concerted attack, she fought and wounded eleven persons with her sword.»<sup>6</sup>

In the battle of al-Yarmûk Muslim women fought vigorously. Hind bint 'Utbah repeatedly exhorted the other women to

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(1) 'Abd Allâh 'Afîfî : *al-Mar'ah al-'Arabiyyah*, II, pp. 44—46.

(2) Ibn Hajar : *al-Isâbah*, IV, p. 575.

(3) Ibn Abî Usaibi'ah : *Tabaqât al-Atibbâ'*, I, p. 123.

(4) Ibn al-Khatîb : *al-Ihâtah fî Akhbâr Ghirnâtah*, I, 265—266.

(5) Ibn Abî Usaibi'ah : *Tabaqât al-Atibbâ'*, II, p. 70.

(6) Mogannam : *The Arab Woman*, p. 25.

support the men with their swords. <sup>1</sup> In the thick of that battle Juwairiyyah bint Abî Sufyân was seen fighting side by side with her husband. <sup>2</sup>

A «Red Camel» was conspicuous in the battle of Siffîn upon which al-Zarqâ' bint 'Adî was riding. Her enterprise and vigorous speech urging on 'Alî's followers had a great influence on the result of the battle. <sup>3</sup> Another lady called 'Ikrişah bint al-A'rash took part in the same battle. In the field of battle she was seen carrying her military equipment and full of energy. <sup>4</sup>

Under al-Mansûr we read of two royal princesses namely Umm 'Isâ and Labbâbah who, clad in mail, accompanied Muslim troops marching towards the Byzantine territories. <sup>5</sup>

#### Other activites

The Empress Zubaidah was a lady of wide accomplishment but here I shall only mention her as a social reformer. When she made a pilgrimage in 186 A.H., she realized that the Meccan people suffered greatly from a lack of water. Then she ordered her private treasurer to have the aqueduct made which exists to this day. Noticing that he seemed to hesitate on account of the outlay, she ordered that the work should be put in hand at once even though the cost for each blow of the axe should be one dînâr. The expense which amounted to over one million and a half dînârs was paid from her own purse. <sup>6</sup>

Another woman named Labânah of Cordova is reported to have held an office not often enjoyed by women, that of private secretary to the Caliph al-Hakam. <sup>7</sup>

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(1) Al-Balâdhurî : *Futûh al-Buldân*, p. 141.

(2) Al-Tabarî, I, 2100—2101.

(3) Ibn 'Abd Rabbihi : *al-'Iqd al-Farîd*, I, 213.

(4) Ibn 'Abd Rabbihi : *al-'Iqd al-Farîd*, I, p. 215.

(5) Ibn al-Athîr : *al-Kâmil*, V, p. 372.

(6) Jamîl Nakhlah : *Hadârat al-Islâm fi Dâr al-Salâm*, p. 97.  
See also *Murûj al-Dhahab*, II, p. 516.

(7) Khûdâ Bukhsh : *Islamic civilization*, p. 295.

We end this section by quoting the following famous story:

A maid was offered to Hârûn al-Rashîd for ten thousand dinârs. He agreed to take her on condition that she submit to an examination. Therefore the most notable professors of theology, law, exegesis, medicine, astronomy, philosophy, rhetoric and chess examined her in succession and in each case she not only gave satisfactory replies to all their questions, but ended by putting to each of them a question which he was unable to answer.





CHAPTER V  
FOUNDERS, ENDOWMENTS  
and ORGANISATION



## A. Founders

The most distinguished men of medieval Islam to patronise knowledge and establish educational institutions were : al-Ma'mûn, Nizâm al-Mulk, Nûr al-Dîn and Salâh al-Dîn. Reference has been made throughout the whole work to the admirable part played by each of these persons in the educational field. Here a very short account will be given of the intellectual activities promoted by al-Ma'mûn, Nûr al-Dîn and Salâh al-Dîn followed by a concise biography of Nizâm al-Mulk.

*Al-Ma'mûn* (d. 218 A.H.) : «The reign of al-Ma'mûn», says Khûdâbukhsh, «constitutes the most glorious period in the history of Islam as far as literary activity is concerned

It has been truly said that all the intellectual movements of Islamic countries could eventually be traced back to the reign of al-Ma'mûn.» <sup>1</sup>

In the first Muslim educational establishment ( Bait al-Hikmah ) which al-Ma'mûn strongly supported and generously endowed the Arabic language was enriched by the translation of Persian and Greek books. We owe medieval cultural progress and the survival of much of Greek learning to the work done in this institution.

*Nûr al-Dîn* , ( d. 569 A. H. ) : The kingdom of Nûr al-Dîn in Syria was the strongest kingdom arising out of the dissolution of the Saljûk's Empire. The educational activity of Nûr al-Dîn was equal to his political and military ability. Nûr al-Dîn was the first founder of schools in Damascus and other Syrian cities. According to Abû Shâmah schools were the gift of Nûr al-Dîn to the country, and thus al-Shâm which had been deserted by men of learning became, under Nûr al-Dîn, the resort of the intellectual class. <sup>2</sup>

*Salâh al-Dîn* , ( d. 589 A.H. ) : Salâh al-Dîn introduced

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(1) *Islamic civilization*, 276—277.

(2) *Al-Rawdatain*, I : 14.



for the first time, a system of schools to Egypt.<sup>1</sup> Speaking about al-Salahiyyah, Ibn Jubair records that Saladin «Munificently supplied all that is required therefor, commanding the building shall be cared for and beautified and all expenses set down to him.»<sup>2</sup> Neither in Egypt or Syria did he spare money or trouble in promoting knowledge.<sup>3</sup> Thus Saladin's kingdom gave the lead in education, and consequently learned men of different nationalities were attracted to it and there they enjoyed his generosity and patronage. 'Abd al-Latif al-Baghdadi records that when he entered Damascus he found a great number of notable men from Baghdād and other cities who were allured by Saladin's favour.<sup>4</sup>

Nizām al-Mulk . ( d. 485 A.H. ) : Two important questions connected with Nizām al-Mulk prompted me to choose him for more detailed study. The answers to these two questions will provide satisfactory explanation of the life of Nizām al-Mulk and his patronage of knowledge:

1. Who was the first founder of schools in Islām?

This is a matter of dispute. Ibn Khallikān states that Nizām al-Mulk was the first founder of schools in Islām, and that he was followed by others.<sup>5</sup> Al-Subkī and al-Maqrīzī record that four schools were established in Nisābūr before the days of Nizām al-Mulk.<sup>6</sup> Al-Subkī, trying to reconcile the two views, says «in al-Nizāmiyyah, the regular pay for the students was arranged for the first time.»<sup>7</sup> I do not admit, however, that Nizām al-Mulk was the first one to arrange regular pay for students as the Fatimid Caliph al-'Aziz bi Allāh had done so

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(1) *Al-Khitat*, II : 363.

(2) Ibn Jubair : *al-Rihlah*, p. 48. See also Lane Poole : *Cairo*, p. 184.

(3) Ibn Jubair, p. 52.

(4) *Al-Ifādah wa al-I'tibār*, p. 16.

(5) *Wafayāt al-A'yān*, I, p. 202.

(6) *Tabaqāt al-Shafi'iyyah*, III, p. 137 and *al-Khitat*, II, p. 363

(7) *Tabaqāt al-Shafi'iyyah*, III, p. 137.

about one century before the time of Nizâm al-Mulk.<sup>1</sup> Moreover establishing schools does not depend upon arranging regular pay for the students. And had Ibn Khallikân meant that Nizâm al-Mulk was not the first founder of schools but the first one to arrange this regular pay he would have said so. I believe, in agreement with Ibn Khallikân, that Nizâm al-Mulk was the first founder of schools in Islâm in the real sense of the word. Every previous effort was shortlived and limited, and can be traced back to a much earlier date than the schools of Nîsâbûr.

What is attributed to Nizâm al-Mulk in the movement which has never ceased, the system for educating all Muslims and the network of schools founded everywhere in the empire. No one can claim to have preceded Nizâm al-Mulk in this achievement.

2. Why were al-Nizâmiyyahs called after the Wazîr and not after the Sultân?

A brief biography of this illustrious minister will answer this question showing how he eclipsed even his Sultans. We have many sources of the life of Nizâm al-Mulk, among the most important of which is al-Subkî's biography covering eleven pages in the best rethorical Arabic style in which al-Subkî describes Nizâm al-Mulk as the greatest reformer and personality in the Muslim world. <sup>2</sup>

Nizâm was born on Friday 21st, Dhu al-Qa'dah 408 A. H. (April 10th 1018 ) in Nûqân one of the two chief towns of the province of Tûs. We have no interest in his childhood and indeed we have no reliable information concerning his early life. The early life of such a self-made man is usually written later and so it is usually affected by his glory.

About 440 A.H., however, he joined the Saljûks' service and at their court his ability and sincerity put him in a position to overshadow all his opponents. Tughrul beg, introducing him, said to Alp Arslân, his nephew, « Consider him as your father

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(1) Al-Maqrîzî : *al-Khitat*, II : 341.

(2) *Tabaqât al-Shafi'iyyah al-Kubrâ*, III, pp. 135—145.

and take his advice.» <sup>1</sup> At the death of Tughrul beg ( 455 ), Nizâm al-Mulk greatly helped in obtaining the throne for Alp Arslân in spite of the will of Tughrul beg who had appointed Alp's brother, Sulaimân, to be the successor.<sup>2</sup> Alp Arslân , after obtaining the throne, dismissed his uncle's Wazîr, al-Kundurî, as this minister at first supported Sulaimân.<sup>3</sup> Nizâm al-Mulk, then, became the most eminent figure in the court and occupied the place of al-Kundurî with remarkable energy and competence. Besides his ability as a politician he was an excellent warrior. He accompanied Alp Arslân on almost all his numerous campaigns. He fought together with the young prince Malikshâh until they captured a number of their enemies' fortresses, <sup>4</sup> and he led troops alone in many battles.

When Alp Arslân was assassinated in 465 A. H. Nizâm al-Mulk again played a notable part to secure the throne for the eighteen year old Malikshâh. <sup>5</sup> In order to achieve this goal, Nizâm al-Mulk fought against many enemies and put down many rebellions, some of which were led by members of the royal family. <sup>6</sup> In many cases the wisdom of Nizâm al-Mulk led to avoidance of great trouble and restored peace. <sup>7</sup>

As soon as security was guaranteed, Nizâm al-Mulk was given a free hand to deal with all the affairs of the empire according to his own initiative and without consulting the Sultan. Malikshâh, proclaiming that, swore to be sincere to his Wazîr, called him his father and granted him the title « Atâbik » which was used for the first time and which means the Prince-father. <sup>8</sup>

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(1) Ibn Khallikân, I, p. 202.

(2) Ibn al-Athîr : *al-Kâmil*, X, pp. 18—19, Ibn Khallikân, II, pp. 66—67.

(3) Ibn al-Athîr : *al-Kâmil*, X, pp. 18,19, and the minister was later beheaded.

(4) *Ibid.* p. 25.

(5) Ibn al-Jawzî : *al-Muntazim*, IX : 65.

(6) Ibn al-Athîr, X, p. 25. Ibn Khallikân, I, p. 202.

(7) See Ibn Khallikân, II, p. 181.

(8) Ibn al-Athîr, X, p. 54.

Nizâm al-Mulk became the real monarch of the empire and his ministry, indeed, surpassed the Sultanate. The Sultan was satisfied with his title, and was happy to spend his time in pleasure. <sup>1</sup>

Nizâm al-Mulk, however, proved competent and his authority, was unchallenged. In his early years in the ministry he was often engaged in successful campaigns and conquests. Then turning his attention to internal affairs, he abolished unjustly imposed taxation, settled sectarian disputes <sup>2</sup> and treated the subjects very kindly. <sup>3</sup>

In addition to his political skill he was also a man of high intellectual attainments. He was not only a patron of knowledge but also a learned man. He received his education from the celebrated scholars in Isfahân, Nîshâbûr and Baghdâd. <sup>4</sup> He had perfectly studied many subjects especially Traditions in which he became an expert. He, very often, sat to read *Hadîths* to a big audience in Baghdâd and in many cities of Khurâsân. The most learned men of the age joined his circle. <sup>5</sup> It is attributed to him that eminent theologians such as Imâm al-Haramain and Abû al-Qâsim al-Qushairî, who had been driven from their homes before his time on account of sectarian persecution, began to return and resume their work. <sup>6</sup> On his own initiative he founded schools, endowed them, supplied their libraries with various useful books, generously paid the professors and granted scholarships to all the students. <sup>7</sup> So it is obvious that this intellectual activity owed its revival to his plans and encouragement.

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(1) Al-Subkî : *Tabaqât al-Shâfi'iyyah al-Kubrâ*, III, p. 139, and Ibn al-Jawzî : *al-Muntazim*, IX : 65.

(2) Ibn al-Athîr : *al-Kâmil*, X, p. 141.

(3) Ibn al-Athîr, X, p. 54.

(4) Al-Subkî : *Tabaqât al-Shâfi'iyyah al-Kubrâ*, III, p. 140.

(5) *Ibid.* X, p. 141, al-Subkî : *Tabaqât al-Shâfi'iyyah*, III, p. 140.

(6) Ibn al-Athîr, X, p. 141.

(7) Ibn Khallikân, I, p. 202, al-Subkî, III, p. 140.



The establishment of schools, then, was one of his benefactions and thus they were justly called after him. Still if such institutions were to be ascribed to the man of the highest position in the empire, we have clear evidence that the ministry of Nizâm al-Mulk outshone the Sultanate. <sup>1</sup>

In a certain dispute, Malikshâh threatened Nizâm al-Mulk to remove the inkpot from the latter's desk as a sign of dismissal. In his reply, Nizâm al-Mulk said that if the inkpot were removed from his desk the Sultan's crown would not remain on his head. <sup>2</sup> And he reminded the Sultan that it was due entirely to his efforts that he had obtained the throne. <sup>3</sup> This severe reply kindled the jealousy of the Sultan who, it is recorded, plotted against him and had him assassinated on the 10th Ramadân 485 A.H. <sup>4</sup> The Sultan did not survive his trusty minister for a long time as he died in the middle of the next month. Their deaths gave the signal for widespread internal disorders which resulted in the dissolution of the empire and caused the heavy defeat in the first Crusade.

## B. Endowments

Up to the time of al-Ma'mûn there was no special institution built for higher educational purposes. Education was conducted in establishments which were originally organized for selling books, worshipping etc. When a building was erected for educational aims it was usually supported by rich and generous endowments. Bayt al-'Ilm was, as far as we know, the first institution of that kind. « Al-Ma'mûn did not wish the progress of knowledge to depend on the accidental munificence of individual caliphs or nobles of the state, and with a true regard for the

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(1) Al-Subkî, III, p. 139.

(2) Ibn al-Jawzî : *al-Muntazim*, IX : 67.

(3) Ibn al-Athîr, X, p. 138.

(4) *Ibid.* p. 139, Ibn Khallikân, I, 203. For another record concerning the minister's murder, see Ibn al-Athîr, X, p. 137.

dignity of letters, he made it independent of casual gifts by creating permanent endowments for its promotion and support.» <sup>1</sup> The idea of al-Ma'mûn was adopted by almost all the patrons of knowledge and so the establishing of a school was commonly accompanied by the allotting of endowments to cover its expenditure. Moreover, when a mosque became a favourite place for teaching, endowments would be arranged for it, and even corners of a mosque might each have separate endowments. In the following survey a brief account of the endowments will be given.

*Nizâm al-Mulk*: The misfortune which fell upon al-Nizâmiyyah school and caused its disappearance seems to have fallen, too, upon the documents and records of its endowments. While I succeeded in collecting accurate details of endowments which belonged to other institutes, as will be shown below, I was not able to find any detailed or precise documents of the endowments allotted to al-Nizâmiyyah in spite of the fact that I spared no effort in my attempt to do so. Nevertheless the material I obtained will give a clear picture of these rich endowments.

Ibn al-Jawzî states that in Jumâdâ II 26th 462 A.H. (Three years after the opening of al-Nizâmiyyah of Baghdâd ) judges and people of high standing were called to the school where the text of its endowments was read for confirmation. Ibn al-Jawzî continues, saying: « It comprises estates, property and a neighbouring market.» <sup>2</sup>

Abû Shâmah in his work «*al-Rawdatain*» states that when Nizâm al-Mulk built the famous institutions called after him, he allotted sufficient endowments for their support.<sup>3</sup> Furthermore Ibn Jubair reports that in his day there were thirty schools in Baghdâd and the building of each excelled any beautiful palace, but al-Nizâmiyyah was the best of all. All these schools

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(1) Sayid Amir "Alî : *A Short History of the Saracens*, p. 274.

(2) *Al-Muntazim*, VIII, p. 256 and for the market see also Ibn al-Athîr, X : 71, 73.

(3) *Al-Rawdatain*, I, p. 26.

were supported by extensive land and property.<sup>1</sup>

Muhammad 'Abduh reports that the annual income of the endowments of al-Nizâmiyyah of Baghdâd was fifteen thousand dînârs.<sup>2</sup> Al-Alûsî records that it was this rich income which gave seekers of knowledge the opportunity of concentrating upon the quest of knowledge because they were provided with food, clothing, accommodation and even mounts. These facilities resulted in the academic success of a great number of learned and erudite men from this school.<sup>3</sup>

*Nûr al-Dîn:* In our study of al-Nûriyyah al-Kubra founded by Nûr al-Dîn an authentic example of a school endowment was given. It allows for the upkeep of the school and for the stipends of teachers and students. Here we can give another example to illustrate the generosity of that patron of learning. « It was one of his favours », says Ibn Jubair, « that he endowed a Mâlikî Zâwiya in the mosque of Damascus occupied by Maghribî students with many endowments some of which are: Two flour mills, seven orchards, white land, baths and two shops. I was told by a Maghribî who was directing this endowment that its income was 500 dînârs a year. »<sup>4</sup>

\* *Egypt:* Endowments existed in Egypt a long time before Nizâm al-Muik and Nûr al-Dîn. « In 378 A.H. ( 988), at the time of al-'Azîz the mosque of al-Azhar was devoted to the use of learned men »<sup>5</sup> and, a few years after that, al-Hâkim, his successor and the founder of Dâr al-Hikmah ( House of Wisdom ), assigned a number of shops, buildings, inns, stores and houses for these two institutions and for his mosque. The

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(1) Ibn Jubair : *al-Rihlah*, p. 229.

(2) *Al-Islâm wa al-Nasraniyyah ma' al-'Ilm wa al-Madaniyyah*, p. 98

(3) *Târikh Masâjid Baghdâd wa Athârihâ*, p. 103.

(4) Ibn Jubair : *al-Rihlah* : 285.

\* It will be recalled that Egypt and Syria were under the same rule during most of this period. Syrian examples can therefore be included under the heading of Egypt.

(5) Stanley Lane Poole : *Cairo*, p. 123, 124.

text of this will can be seen in al-Maqrîzî.<sup>1</sup>

If we pass to the time of the Ayyûbids we will reach the golden age of Egypt for the promotion of learning. Schools, as has already been recorded, were extensively founded and richly endowed not only by the Sultans but also by princes, princesses, ministers, learned men, traders and employees. Here we will choose a few examples to illustrate the endowments of the Ayyûbids' time:.

Ibn Jubair states that whenever a mosque or a school was established, the Sultan « Saladin » was in the habit of fixing adequate endowments to suffice for the employees and the students and to keep the establishment in a good state.<sup>2</sup> That was the policy of Saladin towards his foundations and, in order to have one example with a detailed account, we quote al-Maqrîzî who says: « When Saladin established al-Nasiriyyah, he endowed it with baths in its neighbourhood, a bakery opposite to it, shops at its back and the Island of the Elephant. »<sup>3</sup>

Ayyûbid princes and princesses imitated the Sultans, and, from the numerous instances, we mention only one prince and one princess. The prince is Taqî al-Dîn 'Umar b. Shâhinshâh the nephew of Saladin. Taqî al-Dîn bought the magnificent Fatimid house called « Manâzil al-'Izz » ( the House of the Glory ) and made it a school for Shâfi'î students. He endowed this school with baths called « Hammâm al-Dhahab », an inn known as « Funduq al-Nakhlah » and the Island of al-Rawdah.<sup>4</sup> The princess is Sittushshâm, the sister of Saladin and the founder of many schools. The text of her will is given further on together with a photograph of the tablet.

Not only the royal family but many others did the same: 'A'ishah, the wife of Shujâ' al-Dîn b. al-Dimâgh (d. 614 ), made her husband's house, after his death, a school for Shâfi'î

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(1) *Al-Khitat*, vol. II, pp. 273—275, 283.

(2) Ibn Jubair : *al-Rihlah* : 275.

(3) *Al-Khitat* : II, 400.

(4) *Ibid.* II, 364, Abû Shâmah : *al-Rawdatain* : I: 191.



and *Hanafi* sects and endowed it with a third of the *Dimâghiyyah's* farm, a portion of *Rajm al-Hayyât*, a portion of the *Isrâ'ilî's* baths, a portion of a certain meadow, *Sharkhub's* farm and other properties. <sup>1</sup>

*Al-Maqrîzî* mentions eight *Zâwiyas* («corners» which existed in the mosque of 'Amr for the promotion of learning and he refers to the endowments assigned for each one. Some of these are:

*Zâwiyat al-Imâm al-Shâfi'î* was endowed with land in *Sandabîs* by Sultan al-'Azîz b. *Saladîn*.<sup>2</sup>

*Al-Zâwiyah al-Kamâliyyah* was endowed with an inn in *Cairo* by *Kamâl-al-Dîn al-Samannûdî*.<sup>3</sup>

*Al-Zâwiyah al-Tâjiyyah* was endowed with a number of houses in *Cairo* by *Tâj al-Dîn al-Satîhî*.<sup>4</sup>

Although by endowments schools in the Islamic world were usually supported, some institutions had their expenditure directly from the public treasury: *Ya'qûb b. Killis* was instructed by al-'Azîz to distribute one thousand *dînârs* monthly among a certain group of learned men.<sup>5</sup> Astonishing generosity on the part of a patron of learning is recorded by *Ibn Battûâtâh* who reports that the King *Ahmad* of *Idhaj* used to spend one third of his kingdom's budget on education.<sup>6</sup>

I conclude this section with the will of *Sittushshâm* drawn partly from the original tablet and partly from another source.

The will is very detailed and comprises sections dealing with property, expenditure and moral conditions. And the school was called « *al-Madrasah al-Shâmiyyah al-Juwwâniyyah* ». It has vanished and now a house stands in its place, but the main

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(1) *Al-Nu'imî : Tarîkh al-Madâris* : I : 236—237.

(2) *Al-Khitat* : II : 255.

(3) *Ibid* : II : 256.

(4) *Ditto*.

(5) *Mez : Die Renaissance des Islams*, translated by M. Abû Rîdah, I : 294.

(6) *Tuhfat al-Nuzzâr* : II : 31.



( Fig. 14 )

Endowment tablet of al - Madrasah al - Shāmiyyah al - Jawwāniyyah

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entrance still exists with a lintel above the door upon which the endowments are written as appears in figure 14 . The translation reads as follows:

«In the name of God the Gracious and Merciful. This is the school of the great Princess Sittushshâm, the mother of Husâm al-Dîn and the daughter of Ayyûb, may God have mercy on her. She has assigned this school to the Shâfi'î theologians and students, and endowed the building and its occupants with the whole farm called «Bezinah», eleven and a half portions out of 24 from the farm called «Jirmâna», 14 1/7 portions out of 24 from the farm called « al-Tînah», half of the manor called «Majîdal-al-Suwaydah» and the whole farm called « Majîdal al-Qaryah».

The expenditure of this income is detailed in this will as follows :

«The first thing is to keep the school in good condition: Any damage should be repaired, oil, lamps, mats, carpets, pendant lamps, candles and any other needs should be bought and paid for.

Secondly the teacher is to be given one sack of wheat, one sack of barley and 130 Nâsirî dirhams per month.

Thirdly one tenth of the rest is to be given to the supervisor of the school and the property.

Fourthly 300 Nâsirî *dirhams* annually for sweets and fruit to be distributed in the evening celebration of the middle of Sha'bân.

Finally the remaining sum is to be given to the theologians, students and the staff in general, everybody to take what he deserves according to the supervisor's opinion.

Everyone on the staff must be of good character, chaste and following the Sunni sect. And in order to keep the staff in a good financial position the number of recipients is limited to 20 persons unless the income increases; then the supervisor can have more according to the extra sum.» <sup>1</sup>

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(1) Al-Nu"îmî : *Târikh Madâris Dimashq* : I : 302—303.



## ORGANISATION

### The Circle

The circle, which came into being at the very beginning of Islâm, still exists at the present time. It is a thing commonly seen in al-Azhar's hall and in many other mosques all over the Islamic world. The teacher usually seated himself on a dais or cushion against a wall or pillar. The audience formed a circle in front of him, and the repeaters and visitors of high standing would occupy the nearest places to the teacher on both sides. Regular students gathered in one part of the circle leaving a space for accidental visitors. Everyone was generally anxious to sit as near to the teacher as he could, but he should not trespass on the places reserved for other classes of listener.<sup>1</sup>

The teacher opened the lecture by reciting some verses of the *Qur'ân*, and praying that God might be merciful to the Prophet, his relations and his Companions and then commenced the lecture.

If the teacher was reading from his private notes of which there were no copies in the hands of the students the lesson would be *Imlâ'* (dictation). In this case the teacher would dictate the text *Hadîth* by *Hadîth* <sup>2</sup> or clause by clause and these would be written down by the students. After each *Hadîth* or clause the teacher would give an explanatory note which was usually recorded by the students in the margin. At the end of the course, the teacher might occasionally peruse one or two of

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(1) Ibn Jumâ"ah : *Tadhkirat al-Sâmi" wa al-Mutakallim* p. p. 147—151 abridged, see also al-"Abdarî: *al-Madkhal*, I, p. 199.

(2) Together with the Succession up to the prophet.

the students' manuscripts or require these to be read to him. He would then make any necessary correction<sup>1</sup> and might possibly sign the manuscript as a mark of his approval. The teacher's signature was sometimes accompanied by a permit allowing his student to use that book as a basis for his own lectures. Thus in the case of *Hadîth* the student entered the line of succession from the Prophet. These *Amâlî* or manuscripts were the early Muslim books<sup>2</sup> of which many are extant and some still unpublished.

If the text was obtainable the method was for the regular students to read the subject on the eve of the lecture and even to discuss the difficult points with each other. During the lesson every student would have his copy in his hand. Then according to Ibn Khaldûn the teacher would start by giving a general survey of the subject concerned. Secondly he would go back to explain the subject and give sufficient details until the lesson was satisfactorily comprehended. Thirdly he would return to the more difficult and disputed points for greater clarification.<sup>3</sup> But in fact reading the text would often replace the second of the above — mentioned stages. The teacher would interrupt his reading to explain the matter clause by clause<sup>4</sup> and the students would take the explanatory notes from him and write them down in the margin of their books. To illustrate the importance of the explanatory notes I mention the following anecdote: Al-Ghazâlî made a long journey from Tûs to Jurjân to listen to Abû Nasr al-Ismâ'îlî and obtain such notes. On his way home, al-Ghazâlî was met by a band of highwaymen who took all his property including his bag of notes and left him. Al-Ghazâlî took the risk of following them but

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- (1) Al-Walîd b. Bakr: *al-Wijâzah* 18 B, 19 A MS. in the private possession of al-'Azzâwî : *Baghdâd*.
  - (2) Muhammad 'Abduh : *al-Islâm wa al-Nasraniyyah Ma' al-'ilm wa al-Madaniyyah* p. 98.
  - (3) *Al-Muqaddimah* p. 394.
  - (4) Yâqût : *Irshâd*, VI, p. 282.

their chief turned to him and said: «Go back or you will perish.» Al-Ghazâlî then begged him just to return him the bag saying: «It contains something useless to you, some notes which I made a long journey to hear, to write down and learn.» Fortunately, the chief acceded to his entreaties and ordered one of his men to give him back the bag. <sup>1</sup>

Any listener had a full right to raise any question connected with the subject both during the lecture and at the end. Regular students were encouraged to put questions and discuss points with their teachers; and it was not uncommon for a student's views to differ from those held by the teacher. <sup>2</sup>

The Prophet's saying to encourage questioning runs: «Knowledge is a coffer the key of which is the question.»<sup>3</sup> And 'Alî b. Abî Tâlib is related to have said: «Failure accompanies awe, and ignorance accompanies shyness»<sup>4</sup> Still more when an old man asked al-Ma'mûn: «Is it disgraceful of me to inquire?» Al-Ma'mûn replied: «It is disgraceful of you not to inquire.»<sup>5</sup> and when Dighfil was asked how he could have acquired all his knowledge, he answered: «By questioning and thinking.»<sup>6</sup>

However, the discussion in the circle had to be conducted according to a certain etiquette. No question was to be asked from bad motives such as hypocrisy<sup>7</sup> or a desire to embarrass the teacher. <sup>8</sup> The student must choose the right time for questioning, avoiding unpopular interruption, and must not expect an immediate answer to his interrogation. <sup>9</sup>

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(1) The biography of al-Ghazâlî in the beginning of *al-Ihyâ'* Vol. I, p. 2.

(2) Kurd 'Alî : *al-Islâm wa al-Hadârah al-'Arabiyyah*, II, p. 8.

(3) Al-Isfahânî : *Muhâdarât al-Udabâ'* : I, 27.

(4) Ibn Qutaibah : *'Uyûn al-Akhhâr* : II, 123.

(5) Al-Isfahânî : *Muhâdarât al-Udabâ'*, I, 26.

(6) *Ibid.* I, 27.

(7) *Ditto.*

(8) Ibn Qutaibah : *'Uyûn al-Akhhâr*, II, 123.

(9) Al-'Abdarî : *al-Madkhal*, I, p. 90, old edition.

Questions below the standard were always considered foolish. On one occasion, a man in the circle of Abû 'Uбайдah asked him a silly question which implied stupidity and ignorance in the questioner. Soon after the teacher had replied another man asked another question of this sort and a third man did the same. Abû 'Uбайдah was so annoyed that he picked up his shoes and ran from the circle shouting: «How did the beasts gather in my circle to-day?»<sup>1</sup>

The teacher sometimes played the part of a questioner. After finishing the lecture, it was considered advisable for him to ask his students a number of questions to test their attainment in the subject and in order to give the less gifted students an opportunity of profiting by this repetition.<sup>2</sup>

### Stages of Education

The reader might have observed the different standards connected with different places in which Muslim education was conducted. It seems to me that the various stages now noted in most countries; elementary, secondary, university and research existed early in the Islamic Empire. The elementary education was carried on in the *Kuttābs* as has already been pointed out. Education of a university standard was dealt with in bookshops, houses of learned men and the literary salons as indicated before and attested by many examples. In mosques secondary and university education were conducted. Usually many circles of different status appeared in one mosque and each student could join the circle which suited his intellectual level. My own observation, in addition to what is mentioned in many sources, has led me to the conclusion that in addition to the circles of university standard generally mentioned, circles for secondary education were also held in the mosque. Al-Maqrizī states that many circles were held in the mosque of

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(1) See the story and the questions in Yāqūt : V, p. 272.

(2) *Tadhkirat al-Sāmi' wa al-Mutakallim*, p. 53.



"Amr, one of which was called after al-Imâm al-Shâfi'i who taught in it. Others such as al-Majdiyyah, al-Sâhibiyyah, al-Kamâliyyah and al-Mu'iniyyah in the same mosque were attributed to their founders without reference to their teachers or to the names of teachers of less importance.<sup>1</sup> The same is stated by Ibn Jubair about the *Halqas* in the mosque of Damascus. Moreover Ibn Jubair mentions an elementary school for teaching children in the same mosque.<sup>2</sup>

I conclude that a Muslim student received his elementary education in the *Kuttâb*, mostly outside the mosque, and after finishing it he would have his secondary education in the mosque where there were special circles for this standard. Having made progress he would be qualified to join higher circles in the same mosque or in another one where higher studies were carried on. But it should be remembered that some mosques, such as al-Azhar, especially under the Fatimids, were reserved for education of a higher grade.

When schools were founded in the Islamic world it was noticeable that their standard depended upon their teachers. After considering the numerous professors who held such positions, <sup>3</sup> I can say confidently that most of the above-mentioned schools had fluctuating standards. Nevertheless some schools such as al-Nizâmiyyah institutions were always of high standard as they were staffed by the best scholars of the time.

Research studies were conducted in the Islamic Empire. It is recorded that al-Ma'mûn, when he wanted al-Farrâ' (d. 207 A.H.) to write a certain work, prepared very comfortable accommodation for him in the Palace, put all the library at his disposal, arranged food and service for him and appointed some clerks to help him in writing whatever he needed. During this period al Farrâ' wrote *Kitâb al-Ma'ânî* which was con-

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(1) *Al-Khitat* : II, 255—256.

(2) *Al-Rihlah* : See pp. 265—272

(3) See al-Nu'imî and *Hasn al-Muhâdarâh passim*, for teachers in Schools.

sidered a very important work. <sup>1</sup> In another part of this thesis, I have spoken about the translation from foreign languages into Arabic with commentaries and additions, a kind of work which can be included in research.

### Residential Education

Residential education was familiar to the early Muslim students before and after the establishment of schools. Since al-Azhar was founded, more than a thousand years ago, native and foreign students have dwelled in it. To each country or province of Egypt a portico «*Riwâq*» was assigned in which the students could live freely or sometimes under the authority of the Shaikh *al-Riwâq*. Bread and other food as well as confectionery were offered to them at short intervals. <sup>2</sup>

Ibn Jubair, who was an eye-witness, describes the facilities granted to the students in Egypt as follows: «Every student is offered a lodging to which he resorts, a teacher to instruct him in whatever art he wants and regular grants to cover all his needs.» <sup>3</sup>

In al-Nasiriyyâ, built by Saladin in Egypt, professors and students often had lodgings in the college and there were also a variety of lecture rooms, libraries, laboratories and other adjuncts. <sup>4</sup> Speaking about lodgings for teachers leads us to record that when al-Malik al-Ashraf (d. 635) bought the house of Qây-mâz and rearranged it as a school, he built a house for its teacher in the place of the big baths. <sup>5</sup>

Such lodgings were not only supplied in Egypt but also in Baghdâd and Syria. "Imâd al-Dîn al-Isfahânî reports that al-Nizâmiyyah had dwellings which were occupied by teachers

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(1) Ibn al-Anbârî : *Tabaqât al-Udabâ'* : p.p. 127—128.

(2) Al-Maqrîzî : *al-Khitat* : II, 276—277.

(3) *Al-Rihlah* : 42.

(4) Stanley Lane Poole : *Cairo*, p. 190.

(5) Al-Nu'imî, p. 1, 19.

and students. <sup>1</sup> And «the great kitchen of al-Mustansiriyyah college», says Khûdâ Bukhsh, «provided daily rations of meat and bread to all the inmates.»<sup>2</sup>

In the medieval Syrian schools lodgings seem to have been considered an essential part of the buildings. I visited several surviving schools in different Syrian cities and no single one of them lacks residential quarters. Most of them resemble al-Nûriyyah al-Kubrâ of which some details have been given.

Ibn Jumâ'ah in his work *Tadhkirat al-Sâmi* draws up the regulations for residence in boarding schools: «Only students of good character should be admitted to these establishments, institutions for girls should be in secluded places in order that men would not pass near.<sup>3</sup> Students residing on upper floors should walk lightly and not drop heavy things on the floor so that they would not disturb the people below.<sup>4</sup> A student should not stand at the entrance of the building or in its hall nor go in and out continually;<sup>5</sup> he is not to look into other people's rooms <sup>6</sup> and lastly he must avoid <sup>7</sup> all bad habits.»

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(1) *Zubdat al-Nasrah*, p. 52.

(2) *Islamic civilization*, 287.

(3) p. 229.

(4) p. 230.

(5) p. 231.

(6) p. 233.

(7) p. 234.

## SUPPLEMENT





## SUBJECTS

Two important facts influenced me when I reached this chapter of my thesis:

1. Space does not allow me to give sufficient details about subjects studied in Muslim institutes such as Islamic philosophy, medicine, mathematics, religious and linguistic studies. A single one of these subjects would require a thesis to itself. Moreover most of these subjects have been studied separately in ancient and modern works.<sup>1</sup>

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(1) For modern works on Arabian medicine, for example,  
See :

- A. *Qawânîn al-sihhah "Ind al-Muslimîn* : Dr. Mahmûd Sidqî Egypt 1910.
- B. *Fadl al-"Arab "alâ al-Jirâhah* : Dr. H. al-Harrawî Egypt 1917.
- C. *Arabian Medicine* : Edward Browne London 1921.
- D. *Alât al-Tibb wa al-Jirâhah wa al-Kahâlâh "Ind al-"Arab* : Dr. A. "Isâ Egypt 1925.
- E. *Arabian Medicine* : Campbell London 1926.
- F. *Al-Tibb al-"Arabî wa Athâruh* : Dr. Z.A. "Alî Egypt 1931.
- G. *Encyclopaedia Britannica*, s. v. Medicine.  
And for mathematics see :
  - A. *History of Physics in its Elementary Branches* : Cajoria New York 1929.
  - B. *"Ulûm al-"Arab al-Riâdiyyah wa Intiqâluhâ Ilâ Urubbâ* : A. F. Abû al-Khayr.
  - C. *Mathematical Recreations* : Rouse Ball London 1944.
  - D. *Encyclopaedia Britannica*, s. v. Mathematics.
  - E. *The Encyclopaedia of Education*, p. 1041.

2. In chapter one «Places for Educational Purposes» a variety of examples have been given to illustrate the kind of study conducted in each group, as we know subjects differed greatly according to the kind of place in which education was carried out.

Thus I had thought of giving no more details connected with subjects. But education in Egypt under the Fatimids had new theories and plans for their propagation which are still obscure in spite of the efforts made by many scholars to elucidate them. The reason for that is believed to be the destruction of the valuable Ismâ'îlî works on several occasions, and the concealment of the few books left as secret ones. While travelling in the Middle East for purposes of research I had the opportunity of meeting some prominent Ismâ'îlî scholars and seeing some important MSS.; as a result, I think I can throw a little more light on this point.

### **Ismâ'ilism in Egypt**

When the Fatimids conquered Egypt in 358 A.H. (969 A.D.) Ismâ'ilism was confronted with a more highly educated people than those of North Africa. The Egyptians surrendered politically, but, in the matter of faith, they showed their opposition from the first moment.<sup>1</sup> The Fatimids, then, began to frame and carry out plans for the dissemination of their belief throughout the whole population. The propaganda which was adopted as their policy, was designed to suit the different standards of class and intellect. To the rank and file, the general principles were stated, but to a selected number the propagandists expounded the secret side of Ismâ'ilism. So the two divergent paths were: secret instruction and public education. Limiting this research to education, I shall speak in some detail

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(1) See the security covenant given by Gawhar to the Egyptians in response to their demand : *al-Maqrîzî : Illî'âz al-Ilunafâ'*, pp. 67—70.

about the public education referring to al-Maqrizî<sup>1</sup> as one source in which those interested can find sufficient information about the secret instruction. The public education was, since the rise of the dynasty, conducted by the Dâ'î al-Du'ât and was completely subjected to his precepts. The following plan will be adopted in treating this subject:

1. Ismâ'îlî doctrines in the Fatimid time
2. Efforts made to propagate these doctrines.
3. Egyptians and Isma'ilism.

### 1. ISMA'ILÎ DOCTRINES \*

#### A. The *Wasî* and the *Imâms*:

Ismâ'îlî people believe that each prophet had a *wasî* who

(1) *Al-Khitat* 1, pp. 391—397.

\* I *Da'â'im al-Islâm, Ta'wil Da'â'im al-Islâm, Asâs al-Ta'wil al-Bâtin, al-Majâlis al-Mustansiriyyah, al-Majâlis al-Mu'ayyadiyyah* and other works mentioned here are extremely reliable in illustrating the Ismâ'îlî doctrines as almost every one of them was written by the Dâ'î al-Du'ât of the time.

II. The private collection of the lawyer 'Abbas al-'Azzâwî of Baghdad contains a valuable MS. under the title «*Simt al-Haqâ'iq*» in which the author al-Dâ'î 'Alî b. Hanzalah expressed Isma'ilî doctrines in poetry. The owner kindly showed it to me, and here I quote the following lines from it :

الحمد لله العلي السامي	عن صفة الكمال والتمام
*	
وقادنا الى ولي الوصي	من بعده مولى الورى علي
*	
وأوجدوا نفوسنا من العدم	تحنناً منهم علينا والكرم
*	
وبعد كل ناطق وصي	يخلفه منتجب مرضى
مبيناً تأويل ما أتى به	من سنة الله ومن كتابه
ثم يقيم بعده أئمة	مطهرين ينشرون الحكمة



would succeed to the prophet's place after his death. <sup>1</sup> The *wasî* was chosen by God, who selected 'Alî to be the *wasî* of Muhammad. The Qur'ânic verse: «*O apostle ! deliver what has been revealed to you from your Lord; and if you do it not, then you have not delivered His message.*»,<sup>2</sup> meant: declare to your people that 'Alî was the *wasî* (guardian) of the Faith. <sup>3</sup> The Prophet immediately did so in Ghadir Khum on the 18th of Dhû al-Hijjah and by this the final and the most important doctrine of Islâm was delivered, an act which the following verse alluded to: «*This day I have perfected for you your religion and completed my favour to you.*»<sup>4</sup>

After 'Alî, al-Hasan assumed his father's place as the first Imâm and at his death, the Imâmâte was transferred to al-Husain and his descendants one by one.<sup>5</sup>

The Imâm, Ismâ'ilîs believe, is very necessary for mankind, and the world always has an Imâm who may be manifest or latent according to the temporal power at his disposal. The real Muslim must know the Imâm of his time. Imâm al-Bâqir is related to have said 'Islâm is built upon seven props and the chief of these is the Imamate. <sup>6</sup> Al-Kulîni states that the pillars of Islam are three: prayer, tithes and the Imamate not one of which will be acceptable without the observance of the other two. <sup>7</sup> To the Prophet himself the Shi'a attribute the follow-

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- (1) *Al-Fatârât* : attributed to Ja'far b. Mansûr leaf 12B MS. Adam had his son Abel as his *wasî*. Noah had his son Shem, Abraham had his son Ismael, Moses had his brother Aaron and Jesus had his disciple Simon. *Ibid.*
  - (2) *Sûra* : 5 verse : 67.
  - (3) *Al-Qâdî al-Nu'mân* : *Asâs al-Ta'wîl al-Bâtin*, 173 A, B, 174 A MS.
  - (4) Q5 : 3, *al-Qâdî al-Mu'mân* : *Da'â'im al-Islâm*, 12B, the story of Ghadîr Khum is very famous, it is mentioned in detail in *Asâs al-Ta'wîl al-Bâtin* 189A, B MS. *Da'â'im al-Islâm*, 13 MS. and *al-Manâqib wa al-Mathâlib*, 68B, MS.
  - (5) *Da'â'im al-Islâm*, 26A, B MS.
  - (6) *Ibid.* 4B and *Ta'wîl Da'â'im al-Islâm* Vol. 1 : 7A, B, MS
  - (7) *Usûl al-Kâfî*. 174B, MS.

ing two Traditions: «Who dies without knowing the Imam of his time is a *Jâhili* (benighted) person». <sup>1</sup> , «O, 'Ali; you and the Imâms from among your descendants will be the *A'râf* (the elevated places) of God between Paradise and Hell. People who knew you will pass to Paradise and those who did not will fall into Hell.» <sup>2</sup>

The *wasî* and the Imâms must be unconditionally obeyed. According to 'Alî Ja'far Muhammad b. 'Alî the *wasî* and the Imams were meant by *Uli al-Amr* in the Qur'anic verse: «O, you who believe! obey Allâh and obey the Prophet and those in authority from among you.» <sup>3</sup>

B. The Infallibility of the Prophets, the *wasî* and the Imâms:

The Shî'a, including the Ismâ'îlî sect, believe in the infallibility of the Prophets without which they would not be trusted and would be useless. <sup>4</sup> In order to justify their belief, the Shî'a gave special interpretation to the Qur'anic verses which attribute certain faults to some prophets.

The *wasî* and the Imâms enjoyed the same privilege for the same reasons. <sup>5</sup> Imâms, the Shî'a add, are the leaders of religion and they are needed to prevent injustice and inequity, and to encourage people to do good things and refrain from evil. Moreover it is the Imâm who explains the Faith and punishes sinners, and a man in this position must not be himself apt to commit sins. <sup>6</sup> The Shî'a, in order to strengthen this idea, adduce more proofs of which we give some examples:

Allâh desires to take away the uncleanness from you, O, kindred of the Prophet, and to purify you. <sup>7</sup>

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(1) *Al-Majâlis al-Mu'ayyadiyyah* I : 156, MS.

(2) *Da'â'im al-Islâm* 18A, MS.

(3) *Sûra* 4 verse 59, see *Da'â'im al-Islâm* 16A, MS.

(4) Muhammad al-Sadr : *al-Shî'ah*, p. 117.

(5) Al-Mûsawî : *Muntahâ al-Murâd*. 59A, B, MS. Egypt.

(6) Sulaimân b. al-Husain : *Irshâd al-Bashar* MS. Abû Ja'far al-Qimmî : *I'tiqâd al-Sadûq* MS. both in the private collection of Al Kâshif al-Ghita' in al-Najaf.

(7) Q. 33 : 33.

"Alî, al-*Hasan*, al-*Husain*, Nine of al-*Husain*'s descendants and I are pure and infallible.<sup>1</sup>

The Imâm never commits any wrong and he is always pure of sin. The Imam is without blemish and he is free from back-sliding.<sup>2</sup>

### C. Dogmatic Qualification of the Imâm

Ismâ'îlî Imâms have never been considered ordinary persons. They have a special qualification which raises them to the position of prophets or even to the status of God.<sup>3</sup> Here we will give some details drawing on the most reliable sources:

Imâms and prophets are given by God whatever knowledge they need.<sup>4</sup> The Imâm knows when he may die and he never dies without his consent.<sup>5</sup> Angels come to him with the information he needs.<sup>6</sup> Imâms are the representatives of God on this earth and through them people's wishes can be conveyed to God.<sup>7</sup>

For the sake of the Imâm the world was created.<sup>8</sup> They know whatever notion may occur to any mind.<sup>9</sup> According to their wishes God may forgive sins,<sup>10</sup> and they are served by angels.<sup>11</sup>

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(1) A Prophet's Tradition : *Muntahâ al-Murâd* MS, 59B.

(2) Al-Mûsawî : *Muntahâ al-Murâd* 59B, MS.

(3) The recent interpretation of this Ismâ'îlî assertion is : God has no names or descriptions and such names and descriptions must be attributed to the *Qalam* ( pen ) to which the *Imâm* is *Mathal* ( example ). « See the theory of *al-Mathal wa al-Mamthûl* by Dr. K. Hussain. » Thus *Imâms* can have the names and descriptions of the *Qalam*. *Diwân al-Mu'ayyed*, p. 98.

(4) Al-Kulînî : *Usûl al-Kâfî* 60A, MS.

(5) *Ibid.* 77A.

(6) *Ibid.* 120 B.

(7) Al-Kulînî : *Usûl al-Kâfî* 57A, MS.

(8) Al-Mûsawî : *Muntahâ al-Murâd* 15A, MS. Egypt.

(9) *Ibid.* 39B.

(10) *Ibid.* 70B.

(11) *Ibid.* 104A.

The Imâm's order must be obeyed as if it were issued by God. God will bless those whom the Imâms bless and will curse those whom the Imâms curse. <sup>1</sup>

Imâms are the countenance of God and his hands. They are the light, which is transferred from one Imam to his successor. <sup>2</sup>

D. The Acceptance of both the Obvious and the Hidden Meaning of the *Qur'ân* and the Traditions.

It is this which chiefly divides the Ismâ'îlî sect from other Muslim sects. This principle gives the Ismâ'îlî the opportunity of subjecting the *Qur'ân* and the Traditions to their own needs. And by practising interpretation according to the principle of two meanings they derived their peculiar belief from the *Qur'ân* and the Traditions. «To rely upon the obvious and the hidden meaning together is as necessary as to rely upon the body and the soul of a person.» they said, adding that «this will help one to gain the benefits and enjoy the beauty of the world. <sup>3</sup> It is useless for any person to worship God without accepting and following this principle». <sup>4</sup>

Al-Nu'mân states that the obvious meaning resembles Islâm and the hidden one resembles Imân and one of them will never be able to stand without the other. <sup>5</sup> Moreover the *Qur'ân* says God «made complete to you His favours outwardly and inwardly» <sup>6</sup> which means, as they believe, God sends the Prophet to give the obvious interpretation of the religion and sends the *Wasî* and the Imâms to give the hidden interpretation.

Before leaving this topic we give a few examples of Ismâ'îlî interpretations:

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- (1) Al-Kirmanî : *al-Risâlah al-Wadiyyah* 41 MS. in the private possession of Dr. K. Husain, Egypt.
  - (2) *Al-Majâlis al-Mu'ayyadiyyah*, 1 : 111, MS. Photograph in the private possession of Dr. K. Husain.
  - (3) Dâ'î al-Du'ât. *al-Majâlis al-Mustansiriyyah*, p. 27.
  - (4) *Ibid.* p. 29.
  - (5) *Ta'wil Da'â'im al-Islâm*, I : 7A, MS.
  - (6) 13 : 20.



1. The hidden meaning of the Qur'ânic verse «*We have given you seven of the oft-repeated*» <sup>1</sup> (*Mathânî*), is we have appointed the seven Imâms for you. <sup>2</sup>
2. The hidden meaning of «*Whatever communication (Ayah) We abrogate or cause to be forgotten, We replace with one better or similar*», <sup>3</sup> is when an Imâm dies a similar or a better Imâm will take the Imamate. <sup>4</sup>
3. The word (*Ayâtinâ* — Our communications) means the Imâms <sup>5</sup> in the Qur'ânic verse: «*Those who reject Our communications and turn away from them haughtily .. these are the inmates of Hell in which they will abide.*» <sup>6</sup>

#### E. The Imâms and Legislation

The main sources of Islamic doctrine and law are the *Qur'ân* and the Prophet's Traditions. But after the death of the Prophet, many questions arose for which these two sources provided no direct answer. In such cases theologians of the Sunnî sects followed *al-Ra'y* and *al-Qiyâs* (Opinion and analogy) or in other words they used their own judgment or made their decision in accordance with similar cases.

There was no need for the Shî'a to be content with such a method so long as their Imâms were favoured with fresh instructions from God when they were wanted.

The *Imâm's* Traditions, then, formed the third source of Islamic doctrine, and even the Prophet's Traditions can be reliable only if they are passed down by Ismâ'ilî Imâms from one to another.

We conclude this section by quoting the following discussion which took place between Abû Hanîfah al-Nu'mân and Imâm Ja'far:

*Ja'far* : O, Nu'mân what do you do in a question

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(1) 15 : 87.

(2) *Asâs al-Ta'wîl al-Bâlin* 174B, MS.

(3) 2 : 106.

(4) *Al-Majâlis al-Mu'ayyadigiyah*, 1 : 19A, MS.

(5) *Ibid.* 1 : 19A.

(6) *Qur'ân* 7 : 36.

which has no answer in the *Qur'ân* and the Prophet's Tradition ?

*Abû Hanîfah*: I use an analogy.

*Ja'far*: The first one who did so was Satan when he refused to kneel down to Adam saying: «*I am better than him, you created me of fire but you have created him of dust.*» <sup>1</sup> His analogy led him to Hell and torture. <sup>2</sup>

#### F. Examples of *Ismâ'îlî* Jurisprudence

1. In the *Adhân* (calling for prayers) *Ismâ'îlîs* add the sentence حي على خير العمل «come ye to righteous act». <sup>3</sup>

2. *Al-Qunût* in the second *Rak'ah* of the Friday prayers. <sup>4</sup>

3. The number of *al-Takbîrât* differ according to the status of the dead person. It is recorded that *al-Mu'izz* made them seven when the dead man was one of his cousins and five for a common person. <sup>5</sup>

4. In the festival prayers *al-Fâtihah* must be commenced with, and followed by *al-Takbîrât*. <sup>6</sup>

5. The new moons of *Ramadân* and *Shawwâl* are never looked for. It was according to a special system that the *Ismâ'îlîs* always used to begin fasting one or two days before the *Sunnî* sects. *Ramadân* for them is always 30 days. <sup>7</sup>

6. The daughter, at her father's death, has the same right of inheritance as a son would have. <sup>8</sup>

7. A fifth of a man's income must be paid to the *Imâm*. <sup>9</sup>

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(1) Q7 : 12.

(2) *Da'aim al-Islâm* 59B and for similar debate and discussion, see the following pages of the same work.

(3) "Alî b. Zâfir : *al-Duwal al-Munqati'ah* 48A, MS.

(4) *Al-Khitat* II, p. 240, 270.

(5) *Ibid.* I, p. 353.

(6) *Ibid.* I, p. 451.

(7) *Sirat al-Mu'ayyad fi al-Dîn*, p.p. 5—6.

(8) *Al-Maqrizî : al-Khitat*, I, p. 111, II, p. 340.

(9) *Al-Qâdî al-Nu'mân : Kitâb al-Himmah*, p.p. 66—67.

## 2. EFFORTS MADE FOR THE PROPAGATION OF THESE DOCTRINES

### A. by Teaching

Shortly after the arrival of the Fâtimids in Egypt a beginning was made with the establishment of institutions where Ismâ'ilism was to be taught, and the number of such institutions rapidly increased. Many mosques, with al-Azhar at their head, were founded. Dâr al-'Ilm was established and palaces were used for regular lessons. In these places the minister, the Dâ'i al-Du'ât of the time and other learned men sat to teach Ismâ'ili doctrines.

In al-Azhar, Ya'qûb b. Killis used to read *al-Risâlah al-Wazîriyyah* to a great gathering. It was a voluminous work containing the tenets of Ismâ'ili jurisprudence as the author had heard them from the Imâms. Among his audience sat the theologians, judges and traditionists who were to transmit his opinion to the public. <sup>1</sup>

In al-Azhar, too, 'Alî b. al-Nu'mân taught his numerous listeners an Ismâ'ili work called *al-Iqtisâr* which he attributed to his father. <sup>2</sup>

About Dâr al-'Ilm some details have been given in Chapter II. Al-Hâkim pretended that this institute had been founded for instruction in all Sectarian opinions, and to give colour to this assertion he invited some Sunnî jurists to teach in it. But soon afterwards he drove these people away and even killed some of them, <sup>3</sup> and thus the institute became a school for Ismâ'ili doctrines and was completely left to Dâ'i al-Du'ât to supervise it and to appoint its professors. <sup>4</sup>

The Caliph's palace had a certain room called *al-Muhaw-*

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(1) *Al-Khitat* 2 : 341.

(2) *Al-Khitat*, II : 341, Ibn Hajar : *Raf' al-Isr* 91A, B.

(3) Ibn Taghrî Bardî IV : 223.

(4) *Al-Khitat*, I : 458—460, al-Qalqashandî : *Subh al-A'shâ*, III: 366.

wil 1 in which teaching was often conducted. According to the Caliph's instructions, al Qâdî al-Nu'mân used to sit in the palace every Friday to lecture on materials which he had received from the Caliph himself. The lectures attracted so many listeners that the spacious hall would hardly contain them all. 2

In the Caliph's palace, too, Ismâ'îlî doctrines were propagated by Muhammad b. al-Nu'mân who in 365 A.H. attracted a large audience to his lectures. 3

These lessons were collected in several works most of which were lost but fortunately we still have a considerable number of them such as: *Asâs al-Ta'wîl al-Bâtin*, *Da'â'im al-Islâm*, *Ta'wîl Da'â'im al-Islâm*, *al-Majâlis al-Mu'ayyadiyyah*, *al-Majâlis al-Mustansiriyyah* and *al-Majâlis wa al-Musâyarât*.

In the different provinces of the country the *Du'at* took the place of their head (Dâ'î al-Du'ât) in explaining and propagating the Ismâ'îlî doctrines. 4

As has already been mentioned, however, the doctrines were to be propagated gradually and according to the different standards of class and intellect. To the masses the elementary principles were stated, and the study went on gradually until to a selected number who showed their response to the doctrines, the secret side of Ismâ'ilism could be thoroughly expounded. 5

#### B. by Poetry

Poetry was the broadcasting and the Press of that time. «And poets», as Nicholson describes them, «were the leaders of public opinion; their utterances took the place of political pamphlets or of party oratory for or against the government of the day.» 6

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(1) See *al-Khitat*, I : 390.

(2) *Al-Majâlis wa al-Musâyarât*, 68A, B, MS.

(3) *Al-Khitat*, I : 391.

(4) *Ibid.*

(5) *Al-Khitat*, I : 391.

(6) *Literary History of the Arabs*, p. 241.



The Fatimid Caliphs showered endless presents on their poets, and this astonishing generosity encouraged them to redouble their efforts for the spread of Ismâ'ilism. It was considered shameful for a good poet to compose a laudatory poem to the Imâm without giving him the special descriptions mentioned above and without propagating other Ismâ'îlî doctrines. Thus the poetical works of the Fâtimid's poets are considered important sources for Ismâ'ilism. Below is a selection of examples from the works of three famous Fâtimid poets:

#### I. From Ibn Hani's Poetry 1

P.P. 3—7

هو علة الدنيا ومن خلقت له ولعله ما كانت الأشياء

Everything is done for a certain reason; therefore it is for him (the Caliph) that the world was created.

هذا أمين الله بين عباده وبلاده ، ان عدت الأمناء

He is the deputy of God among His servants and in His world if deputies are to be counted.

فاسلم اذا راب المنية حادث واخذ اذا عم النفوس فناء

Be safe though an accident involves creation, and live eternally though the people perish.

P.P. 7—10

ولله علم ليس يحجب دونكم ولكنه عن سائر الناس محجوب

God's knowledge is not veiled from you whereas it is screened from all people.

وأنت معد وارث الأرض كلها فقد حم مقدور وقد خطمكتوب

You are Ma'add the heir of all the world, and this destiny is finally declared.

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(1) See the Dîwân Cairo 1274, A.H.

P. 26

حل برقادة المسيح      حل بها آدم ونوح  
حل بها الله ذو المعالي      وكل شيء سواه ربح

Christ has arrived at Raqqâdah, Adam and Noah have both arrived, O He is God of the supreme height who has arrived. Everything except him is nothing.

P. 28

ما أجزل الله ذخري قبل رؤيته      ولا انتفعت بإيمان وتوحيد

My life was useless before seeing him, and I did not benefit by my faith nor by my monotheism.

P.P. 31—35

امام له مما جهلت حقيقة      وليس له فيما علمت مزيد

This leader has a complete knowledge of things of which the ordinary man is ignorant. There is no equal to him as far as I know.

وان الذي سماك خير خليفة      لجري القضاء الحتم حيث تريد

He who named you the best Caliph, is subjecting Fate to your desire.

P.P. 55--59

امام رأيت الدين مرتبطاً به      فطاعته فوز وعصيانه خسر

To this leader, I see, religion is bound. Salvation is the share of those who obey him, whereas those who disobey him will perish.

P.P. 62—64

ما شئت لا ما شاءت الأقدار      فاحكم فأنت الواحد القهار

What you wished, not what was wished by destiny (has been done). Judge, for you are the unique and the almighty.

هذا الذي ترجى النجاة بحبه      وبه يحط الإصر والأوزار

Loving him will lead to salvation, and by his will, sins will be forgiven.

هذا الذي ترجى شفاعته غداً      حقاً وتحمد ان تراه النار

Indeed, this is the man whose intercession will avail tomorrow, and the fire, seeing him, will die out.

أنتم أحبباء الاله وآله      خلفاؤه في أرضه الأبرار

O, Fatimids, you are the friends of God and you are His kin. In His world you are His righteous agents.

شرفت بك الآفاق وانقسمت بك ال      أرزاق والآجال والأعمار

The world is honoured by you, and fortunes as well as the span of life are granted in accordance to your wish.

P.P. 96—100

فافخر فمن انشائك الفردوس ان      عدت ومن احسانك التنزيل

You can be most proud: Paradise is one of your countless foundations, and the *Qur'ân* is one of your gifts.

P.P, 100—101

وعلمت من مكنون علم الله ما      لم يؤت في الملكوت ميكانيل

Of the divine secrets, you know even what is hidden from the angel Mica'il (Michael).

P.P. 121 - 128

ومتصل بين الاله وبينه      ممر من الأسباب لم يتصرم

He is in contact with God, between the two, there is a path of understanding which will never be severed.

P.P. 137—140

ماذا تريد من الكتاب : نواصب      وله ظهور دونها وبطون

What are you trying to understand from the book (*the Qur'ân*) ? It is a writing whose meaning is partly clear and partly hidden.

لو كان رأيك شائعاً في أمة علموا بما سيكون قبل يكون

If your knowledge were open to the public, then they would know the future before its existence.

P.P. 150—153

هو الوارث الأرض عن والدين أب مصطفى وأب مرتضى

He inherited the world from two fathers: the Prophet and the guardian.

شهيد على ذلك حكم النبي بين المقام وبين الصفا

The best evidence to assure this, is the judgment which was declared by the Prophet in this very place between al-Maqâm and al-Safa (in al-Ghadîr).

## II. From al-Amîr Tamîm's Poetry 1

P. 23

وانك انت المصطفى الملك الذي بطاعته من ربنا نتقرب

Surely you are the chosen caliph by obedience to whom we become nearer to God.

ولولاك كان الملك في غير أهله وكان على أفق الشريعة غيب

Without you the caliphate would have been held by the wrong man, and had this been so, darkness would have covered the religious horizon.

P.P. 51—52

لولا العزيز أمين الله ما جاءت نفسي الى ملجأ منه ولا وزر

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(1) The Diwân is a MS. in the private possession of Dr. Kâmil Husain.



Without al-'Aziz, the deputy of God, I would not have dared to resort to God or seek His help.

يا بن الأئمة والهادين متصلا بصفوة الله أهل الوحي والسور

O, scion of the *Imams* and the leaders in succession from the Prophet to whom the inspiration was given.

ما انت دون ملوك العالمين سوى روح من القدس في جسم من البشر

You alone of the kings of the world have a divine soul in a mortal body.

وأنت بالله دون الخلق متصل وأنت لله فيهم خير مؤتمر

You alone of the people are in communication with God, and of all people you are the most obedient to God.

P. 61

يا صفوة الله من بريته وسر عليانه الذي ظهرا

You are the Chosen of God from among all his creatures, and you are the visible aspect of the majesty of God.

P. 63

يا حجة الله التي أشرقت فينا ويا صاحب كنز الجبار

You are God's evidence which sheds light among us and you possess the treasure of knowledge.

ويا هدي من ضل عن رشده واشتبه الحق عليه فجار

Those who sin and doubt and commit inequity you lead in the path of righteousness.

أبوك جلا الظلم والبغي عن شرائع الدين وانت المنار

Your father purges religion of unjust thoughts and you are the light.

بدت لك آيات عليك شواهد بأنك انت المصطفى من أولي الأمر

Manifest evidence witnesses to your being the chosen one from the chosen leaders.

وانك أنت الخامس القائم الذي تدين له أرض العراقين بالقسر

You are the fifth *Imâm* to whom the Irâqî realm must submit.

وانك مهدي الأئمة كلهم وصاحب ذا الوقت المسمى وذا العصر

You are blessed above all *Imâms* and this age is your age.

يا حجة الرحمن عند عباده وشهابه في كل امر مقبل  
من لم يكن في صومه متقرباً بك للاله فصومه لم يقبل

O, testimony of God among His servants, O thou who sheddest light on obscure matters, whoever fasts without homage to you, his fasting will not be accepted.

### III. From al-Mu'ayyad's Poetry 1

بنفسي مستنصراً بالاله جنود السماء له ناصره

I offer my soul to redeem the *Imâm*, al-Mustansir bi Allâh who wins victories with the help of the hosts of Heaven.

شهدت بأنك وجه الاله وجوه الموالي به ناضره

I confess that thou art the countenance of God by which thy servants' countenances are radiant.

(1) See the *Dîwân*, Cairo, 1949.

وهم أولو الأمر أئمة الهدى عصمة من لاذبهم من الردى

The Imâms have the supreme power over everything, and they are leaders in the way of righteousness. Any person who resorts to them will be fully protected.

مفروضة طاعتهم على الأمم قاطبة من عرب ومن عجم

Obedience to them is imposed upon all nations without exception, both those who are Arabs and those who are not.

اقرأ : طيعوا الله والرسول ثم أولي الأمر بهم موصولا

The above mentioned duty is taken from the Qur'anic verse: «Obey Allâh and obey the Prophet and those in authority from among you». <sup>1</sup>

فوجهك وجه الله المنير ونورك من نوره كالخيار

Your countenance is the countenance of God and your light radiates from His.

يدك يدا الله مبسوطتان وأنت له الخب غير ارتياب

Your open hands are the hands of God and you are undoubtedly his helper.

وأنت الثيب لأهل الثواب وأنت المعاقب أهل العقاب

It is you who will reward good people and punish guilty ones.

قصر به صلى السعير عذره وإلى الولي له تمنى جنانه

(1) 4 : 59.

The palace is Hell to the Caliph's enemies, but to his followers the palace is Paradise.

وَمِنْ حَيْثُ وَجْهَهُ الْإِلَهُ وَجَنِبُهُ      وَلِسَانُ صَدَقِ مُحَمَّدٍ وَجَنَانُهُ

In it lives the Caliph who is the countenance of God and his strength, the tongue of his Prophet and his mind.

مَلِكٌ مَلَائِكَةُ السَّمَاءِ جُنُودُهُ      وَمَمْلُوكٌ مِنْ فَوْقِ الثَّرَى عِبْدَانُهُ

He is a ruler whose soldiers are the angels of heaven, and other kings on the earth are his slaves.

أَيُّ صِيحٍ تَوْحِيدٍ بِغَيْرِ وِلَايَتِهِ      وَوِلَاؤُهُ لِكِتَابِهِ عُنْوَانُهُ ؟

Monotheism will never be acceptable without recognition of the Caliph, and obedience to the Caliph must be the title on the scroll of life.

أَمْ هَلْ لِقُرْآنٍ كَرِيمٍ مِثْلُ      فِي بَيْتِهِ إِلَّا عَلَيْهِ يَأْنِيهِ ؟

It is by him only that the honoured *Qur'ân* can be explained and interpreted.

P. 270

مَعْدُ أَمِيرِ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ الَّذِي بَدَأَ      شَهَابًا يَضِيءُ الْغَرْبَ وَالشَّرْقَ ثَاقِبًا

Ma'add, the Commander of the faithful, is the light which illumines the East and the West.

يَقُومُ مَقَامَ اللَّهِ بَيْنَ عِبَادِهِ      مَتَّيْحًا لَهُمْ رُوحَ الْحَيَاةِ وَسَالِبًا

He occupies God's position among his servants, and thus he gives them life or takes it from them.

وَتَلْقَى النَّبِيَّ الْمُصْطَفَى إِنْ لَقِيتَهُ      خَلَّاتُكَ لَاهُوتِيَّةٌ وَضُرَائِبًا

تَرَى مِنْهُ إِنْ صَلَّى النَّبِيُّ مَصْلِيًّا      وَتَحْسَبُهُ إِنْ قَامَ يُخْطَبُ خَاطِبًا

Whenever you meet him you are meeting the Prophet in majesty, and whenever you see him praying or hear him delivering a speech you are in the presence of the Prophet.



### C. By Observance of Certain Holy Days

The Fatimids created many Holy Days to strengthen Ismâ'îlism in the memories of their followers and to propagate its doctrines in order that it might win new followers. These occasions were distributed throughout the year so that the doctrines would be recalled from time to time. Some details of a few examples of these Holy Days will be given here:

*Id al-Ghadîr* : *Id al-Ghadîr* was the most important of these festivals. Its name is attributed to Ghadîr Khum, a certain place three miles from al-Juhfah, and its date is the 18th of Dhi al-Hijjah. According to the Shî'a belief, the Prophet concluded his mission by declaring that "Alî was the *Wasi* of the religion, and this declaration took place in Ghadîr Khum on the 18th of Dhi al-Hijjah. Thus they considered the day worthy of celebration.

The occasion of al-Ghadîr was a happy festival in which Ismâ'îlî followers in Egypt used to put on the finest clothes they had, to liberate some of their slaves, to kill animals for the poor as an act of grace <sup>1</sup> and to do as many good deeds as they could. <sup>2</sup>

The people used to assemble in the mosque with the Caliph and persons of high rank, and the *Khatîb* would deliver his speech, reciting the Prophet's words to "Alî by which the latter became the *Wasi*. The *Qâdi al-Qudât*, then, would lead the prayer of thanks to God, after which the members of the congregation would congratulate each other and disperse cheerfully. <sup>3</sup>

*The Day of "Ashûrâ"*: It is the 10th of al-Muharram, the

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(1) In 515 A.H. the number of animals slaughtered in the Caliph's palace in the Corban Bairam and in the following *Id al-Ghadîr* was 2561 of camels, cows and sheep altogether. The Caliph with his own hand slew the camels and the cows (*al-Khitat* 1 : 436 ).

(2) *Al-Khitat*, I : 388—389, 492.

(3) *Ibid.* I : 389, 437—438.

date on which al-Husain b. "Alî was killed in Karbilâ' in 61 A.H. by Umayyad troops. Thus it was a very sad occasion: the Fatimid caliph would sit on the ground mourning, and the followers, round him, would appear in extreme grief. Sand would replace the fine carpets in the halls and food would be very poor composed of lentils and salted onions and gherkins only. Poetry and speeches recited on the occasion would be against all usurpers of the caliphate which, according to Shî'a belief, belongs to "Alî and his descendants who had been chosen by God and declared by the Prophet. The gathering, after listening to these speeches in the mosque, used to go into the streets lamenting al-Husain and weeping for the severe cruelty with which their Imâm had been treated.<sup>1</sup>

*Birth Days :* The Fatimids used to celebrate six birth days; the birth day of the Prophet, "Alî, Fâtimah, al-Hasan, al-Husain and that of the reigning Caliph. On each of these birth days, sweets were distributed and speeches in the different mosques were delivered in which the opportunity for the propagation of Isma'ilism was fully taken.<sup>2</sup>

#### D. By the Exclusive Employment of Ismâ'ilis

It was natural that the Fatimids should not trust people of Sunnî belief in the administration of Egypt, since «Isma'ilism to the Fatimid employee», as Ibn Munjib puts it, «is not less than Islam to him». <sup>3</sup> The Fatimids would rely upon their followers who, at the same time, expected a reward for having fought in favour of Ismâ'ilism. But that could not be done immediately after the conquest of Egypt as it would arouse the hatred of the population. The Fatimids at first adopted a peaceful policy and left the main posts in the old hands.<sup>4</sup>

(1) *Al-Khitat*, I : 430—432, 490.

(2) *Ibid.* 432—433, 491.

(3) *Qânûn al-Rasâ'il*, p.p. 86—97.

(4) Ja'far b. al-Furât carried on the ministry, Abû Tâhir Muhammad b. Ahmad continued to be Qâdî al-Qudât and the *Khatâbah* was left to Banî "Abd al-Samî".

Gradually the Fatimids limited the influence of the Sunni employees, and before long the affairs of the state were entirely conducted by Ismâ'îlî followers:

The ministry was held by an Ismâ'îlî scholar such as Ya'qûb b. Killis, or at least by an Ismâ'îlî follower.<sup>1</sup>

The great post of Qâdî al-Qudât was very often occupied by an Ismâ'îlî scholar.<sup>2</sup> Members of al-Nu'mân and al-Fârûqî's families held this office for a long time.<sup>3</sup> Very rarely the post was in the hands of a scholar of the Sunnî sect, but in this case he had to follow the Ismâ'îlî Jurisprudence in his judgments. Jawhar, for example, left Abû Tâhir Muhammad b. Ahmad in charge of this work on condition that he use his decisions on inheritance, divorce and the commencement of the fasting according to Ismâ'îlî jurisprudence.<sup>4</sup> And when the Hanbalî Ahmad b. Abî al-'Âwâm was given this post by the Caliph al-Hâkim, one of the conditions was that the Qâdî should have 4 Ismâ'îlî Juridical assessors when giving judgment.<sup>5</sup> A Sunnî scholar Abû al-'Abbâs Ahmad was offered the post but as he showed his determination to follow his own sect the proposal was immediately withdrawn.<sup>6</sup>

Banû 'Abd al-Samî', in whose hands the *Khatâbah* had been left, were dismissed, and instead it was given to men of Ismâ'îlî belief.<sup>7</sup>

The post of Dâ'î al-Du'ât and that of al-Du'ât were purely Ismâ'îlî institutions. These posts were, without exception, occupied by Ismâ'îlî scholars.

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(1) For the Fatimid ministers see al-Suyûtî : *Husn al-Muhadarah*, II : 129--137.

(2) For the Fatimid Qâdîs see al-Suyûtî : *Husn al-Muhadarah*, II: 101--104.

(3) Ibn Hajar : *Raf' al-Isr*, MS. Ibn Zâfir : *al-Dawal al-Munqati'ah*, p.p. 49B, 50, 66B. MS.

(4) Ibn Hajar : *Raf' al-Isr 'an Qudât Misr*, 93A, B. MS.

(5) Ibn Hajar : *Raf' al-Isr*, 19B. MS. Egypt.

(6) Al-Suyûtî : *Husn al-Muhadarah*, II : 104.

(7) Ibn Duqmâq : IV : 61.

The minister, Qâdî al-Qudât and Dâ'i al-Du'ât had to choose their assistants and staffs from among Ismâ'ilî followers. Thus people went over to Ismâ'ilism in order to be eligible for employment.

### 3. EGYPTIANS AND ISMA'ILISM

During the Fatimid time and under the Fatimid pressure <sup>1</sup> and propaganda, Egyptians surrendered and pretended to adopt the Caliph's belief. But it seems that Egyptians never sincerely embraced Isma'ilism. At the fall of the Fatimid dynasty the Ismâ'ilî movement collapsed and never recovered; Egyptians took the opportunity of the rise of the Ayyûbid dynasty to cast off the heavy yoke of Ismâ'ilism. Ibn Wâsil tells us about the 12 Shi'a persons who took advantage of Saladin's absence on one of his campaigns, and went round in the streets of Cairo shouting and appealing to people to co-operate with them in restoring the Fatimid influence, but when they failed to find any response to their appeal, they dispersed in fright. <sup>2</sup>

Saladin, however, put an end to Isma'ilism in Egypt. He met with no difficulty in replacing Shi'a doctrines by Sunnî belief. After some hesitation he gave orders that the name of al-'Adîd be omitted from *al-Khutbah* in a certain mosque and replaced by that of al-Mustadî', the Sunnî Caliph in Baghdad. People attending the mosque welcomed the change, and so orders were issued to all *Khutabâ'* to follow this example.<sup>3</sup> Saladin, too, put the Fatimid Amîrs and partisans under arrest, took al-Qâdî al-Fâdil as his minister, abolished the post of

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(1) We read of examples of violence and torture, sometimes with fatal results, in connection with people who showed their hatred of Isma'ilism or acted against its doctrines. See *al-Khitat*, I : 355, II : 341.

(2) *Mufarrij al-Kurûb*, p.p. 328—329. MS.

(3) *Al-Rawdatain*, I : 194.



Dâ''i al-Du''ât, dismissed the Ismâ''ilî Qâdis and instead put juridical affairs into the hands of Sadr al-Dîn b. Dirbâs. The latter, who was a Shâfi''î theologian, selected his assistants from the followers of the Shâfi''î sect.<sup>1</sup> And, in particular, a counter propaganda was adopted in order to teach people the true faith. A system of schools was introduced into Egypt, and many of them were established in a large scale. These schools, however, are dealt with in some detail in Chapter I of this work.

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(1) *Al-Khitat* : I : 359, II : 343.

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2. The references are arranged in alphabetical order of authors' names, disregarding the prefixes abû, Ibn and al.

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I — The prefixes : Abu ( Father of ), Ibn ( Son of ), Banû (Plural of ibn )and al ( the definite article), as well as " = ع and ' = ء are disregarded in these indexes. Abu, in Particular is sometimes considered where it does not mean father of such as Abû Bakr and Abû al "atâhiyah.

II — The letter «b» between two names stands for «ibn»

III — Works used in this book number over 250 each of which is mostly mentioned more than once. Thus, to avoid lengthening, these indexes do not include the names of authors of works quoted here. These names, however, together with the titles of their works are orderly mentioned in the footnotes.

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BY THE SAME AUTHOR : \*

١ - كيف تكتب بحثاً او رسالة :

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الناشر : مكتبة النهضة المصرية ٩ شارع عدلي بالقاهرة .

الثنى ٢٠

٢ - History of Muslim Education :

وهو هذا الكتاب الذي بين يدي القارىء .

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٣ - تاريخ التربية الاسلامية :

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